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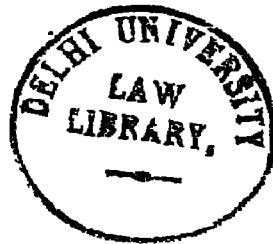
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THE HOLY QUR-AN

TEXT, TRANSLATION & COMMENTARY



BY
ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI



Three-Volume Edition

Vol. I, Containing introductory matter and Suras I to IX
(Being Parts I-X)

LAHORE
SHAIKH MUHAMMAD ASHRAF
KASHMIRI BAZAR

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DEDICATION

To all who love and reverence the Book,
And earnestly strive to find in it,
Not a reflection of their own fancies,
But a clue to Unity, Discipline,
And the Call to higher matters of the spirit,
I dedicate this humble effort at Interpretation,
The fruit of my Life, Thought, and Study.

'ABDULLAH YŪSUF 'ALĪ,
(Servant of Islam).

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION, 1934

I DO not wish to write a long Preface. I wish merely to explain the history of my Project, the scope and plan of this work, and the objects I have held in view.

In separate introductory Notes I have mentioned the useful books to which I have referred, under the headings: Commentaries on the Qur-ān; Translations of the Qur-ān; and the Useful Works of Reference. I have similarly explained the system which I have followed in the transliteration of Arabic words and names; the Abbreviations I have used; and the principal divisions of the Qur-ān.

It may be asked: Is there any need for a fresh English Translation? To those who ask this question I commend a careful consideration of the facts which I have set out in my Note on Translations. After they have read it, I would invite them to take any particular passage in Part I, say ii. 74 or ii. 102, or ii. 164 in the second Part and compare it with any previous version they choose. If they find that I have helped them even the least bit further in understanding its meaning, or appreciating its beauty, or catching something of the grandeur of the original, I would claim that my humble attempt is justified.

It is the duty of every Muslim, man, woman, or child, to read the Qur-ān and understand it according to his own capacity. If any one of us attains to some knowledge or understanding of it by study, contemplation, and the test of life, both outward and inward, it is his duty, according to his capacity, to instruct others, and share with them the joy and peace which result from contact with the spiritual world. The Qur-ān—indeed every religious book—has to be read, not only with the tongue and voice and eyes, but with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our heart and conscience can give us. It is in this spirit that I would have my readers approach the Qur-ān.

It was between the ages of four and five that I first learned to read its Arabic words, to revel in its rhythm and music, and wonder at its meaning. I have a dim recollection of the *Khatm* ceremony which closed that stage. It was called "completion": it really just began a spiritual awakening that has gone on ever since. My revered father taught me Arabic, but I must have imbibed from him into my innermost being something more,—something which told me that all the world's thoughts, all the world's most beautiful languages and literatures, are but vehicles for that ineffable message which comes to the heart in rare moments of ecstasy. The soul of mysticism and ecstasy is in the Qur-ān, as well as that plain guidance for the plain man which a world in a hurry affects to consider as sufficient. It is good to make this personal confession, to an age in which it is in the highest degree unfashionable to speak of religion or spiritual peace or consolation, an age in which words like these draw forth only derision, pity, or contempt.

I have explored Western lands, Western manners, and the depths of Western thought and Western learning, to an extent which has rarely fallen to the lot of an Eastern mortal. But I have never lost touch with my Eastern heritage. Through all my successes and failures I have learned to rely more and more upon the one true thing in all life—the voice that speaks in a tongue above that of mortal man. For me the embodiment of that voice has been in the noble words of the Arabic Qur-ān, which I have tried to translate for myself and apply to my experience again and again. The service of the Qur-ān has been the pride and the privilege of many Muslims. I felt that with such life-experience as has fallen to my lot, my service to the Qur-ān should be to present it in a fitting garb in English. That ambition I have cherished in my mind for more than forty years. I have collected books and materials for it. I have visited places, undertaken journeys, taken notes, sought the society of men, and tried to explore their thoughts and hearts, in order to equip

myself for the task. Sometimes I have considered it too stupendous for me,—the double task of understanding the original, and reproducing its nobility, its beauty, its poetry, its grandeur, and its sweet, practical, reasonable application to everyday experience. Then I have blamed myself for lack of courage,—the spiritual courage of men who dared all in the Cause which was so dear to them.

Two sets of apparently accidental circumstances at last decided me. A man's life is subject to inner storms far more devastating than those in the physical world around him. In such a storm, in the bitter anguish of a personal sorrow which nearly unseated my reason and made life seem meaningless, a new hope was born out of a systematic pursuit of my long-cherished project. Watered by tears, my manuscript began to grow in depth and earnestness if not in bulk. I guarded it like a secret treasure. Wanderer that I am, I carried it about, thousands of miles, to all sorts of countries and among all sorts of people. At length, in the city of Lahore, I happened to mention the matter to some young people who held me in respect and affection. They showed an enthusiasm and an eagerness which surprised me. They almost took the matter out of my hands. They asked for immediate publication. I had various bits ready, but not even one complete *Sipāra*. They made me promise to complete at least one *Sipāra* before I left Lahore. As if by magic, a publisher, a *kātib* (calligraphist, to write the Arabic Text), an engraver of blocks for such text, and a printer were found, all equally anxious to push forward the scheme. Blessed be youth, for its energy and determination! "Where others flinch, rash youth will dare!"

Gentle and discerning reader! what I wish to present to you is an English Interpretation, side by side with the Arabic Text. The English shall be, not a mere substitution of one word for another, but the best expression I can give to the fullest meaning which I can understand from the Arabic Text. The rhythm, music, and exalted tone of the original should be reflected in the English Interpretation. It may be but a faint reflection, but such beauty and power as my pen can command shall be brought to its service, I want to make English itself an Islamic language, if such a person as I can do it. And I must give you all the necessary aid which I can. In rhythmic prose, or free verse (whichever you like to call it), I prepare the atmosphere for you in a running Commentary. Introducing the subject generally, I come to the actual *Sūras*. Where they are short I give you one or two paragraphs of my rhythmic Commentary to prepare you for the Text. Where the *Sūra* is long, I introduce the subject matter in short, appropriate paragraphs of the Commentary from time to time, each indicating the particular verses to which it refers. The paragraphs of the running Commentary are numbered consecutively, with some regard to the connection with the preceding and the following paragraphs. It is possible to read this running rhythmic Commentary by itself to get a general bird's-eye view of the contents of the Holy Book before you proceed to the study of the Book itself.

The Text in English is printed in larger type than the running Commentary, in order to distinguish, at a glance, the substance from the shadow. It is also displayed differently, in parallel columns with the Arabic Text. Each *Sūra* and the verse of each *Sūra* is separately numbered, and the numbers are shown page by page. The system of numbering the verses has not been uniform in previous translations. European editors and translators have allowed their numbering to diverge considerably from that accepted in the East. This causes confusion in giving and verifying references. The different *Qirāats* sometimes differ as to the punctuation stops and the numbering of the verses. This is not a vital matter, but it causes confusion in references. It is important that at least in Islamic countries one system of numbering should be adopted. I have adopted mainly that of the Egyptian edition published under the authority of the King of Egypt. This will probably be accepted in Egypt and in Arabic-speaking countries, as those countries generally look up to Egypt in matters of literature. I am glad to see that the text shortly to be published by the Anjuman-i-Ḥimāyat-i-Islām of Lahore is following the same system of numbering. I recommend to other publishers in India the same good example. If once this is done, we shall have a uniform system of numbering. I

have retained the numbering of Sections, as it is universally used in the Arabic copies, and marks a logical division of the *Sūras*. I have supplied a further aid to the reader in indicating subdivision of the Sections into paragraphs. They are not numbered, but are distinguished by the use of a flowery initial letter.

In translating the Text I have aired no views of my own, but followed the received Commentators. Where they differ among themselves, I have had to choose what appeared to me to be the most reasonable opinion from all points of view. Where it is a question merely of words, I have not considered the question important enough to discuss in the Notes, but where it is a question of substance, I hope, adequate explanations will be found in the Notes. Where I have departed from the literal translation in order to express the spirit of the original better in English, I have explained the literal meaning in the Notes. For example, see ii. 104 n. and ii. 26 n. In choosing an English word for an Arabic word a translator necessarily exercises his own judgment and may be unconsciously expressing a point of view, but that is inevitable.

Let me explain the scope of the Notes. I have made them as short as possible consistently with the object I have in view, viz., to give to the English reader, scholar as well as general reader, a fairly complete but concise view of what I understand to be the meaning of the Text. To discuss theological controversies or enter into polemical arguments I have considered outside my scope. Such discussions and arguments may be necessary and valuable, but they should find a place in separate treatises, if only out of respect to the Holy Book. Besides, such discussions leave no room for more important matters on which present-day readers desire information. In this respect our Commentators have not always been discreet. On questions of law, the Qur-ān lays down general principles, and these I have explained. I have avoided technical details: these will be found discussed in their proper place in my book on "Anglo-Muhammadan Law." Nor have I devoted much space to grammatical or philological Notes. On these points I consider that the labours of the vast body of our learned men in the past have left little new to say now. There is usually not much controversy, and I have accepted their conclusions without setting out the reasons for them. Where it has been necessary for the understanding of the Text to refer to the particular occasion for the revelation of a particular verse, I have done so briefly, but have not allowed it to absorb a disproportionate amount of space. It will be found that every verse revealed for a particular occasion has also a general meaning. The particular occasion and the particular people concerned have passed away, but the general meaning and its application remain true for all time. What we are concerned about now, in the fourteenth century of the Hijra, is: what guidance can we draw for ourselves from the message of God?

I spoke of the general meaning of the verses. Every earnest and reverent student of the Qur-ān, as he proceeds with his study, will find, with an inward joy difficult to describe, how this general meaning also enlarges as his own capacity for understanding increases. It is like a traveller climbing a mountain: the higher he goes, the farther he sees. From a literary point of view the poet Keats has described his feeling when he discovered Chapman's Homer:—

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken,
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific,—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise,—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

How much greater is the joy and sense of wonder and miracle when the Qur-ān opens our spiritual eyes! The meaning which we thought we had grasped expands. New worlds are opened out. As we progress, still newer and again newer worlds "swim into our ken." The miracle deepens and deepens, and almost completely absorbs us. And yet we know that the "face of God"—our final goal—has not yet been reached. We are in the *mulk* of Sulaimān (Q. ii. 102), which the evil ones denied, belied, and even turned into blasphemy. But we can ignore blasphemy,

ridicule and contempt, for we are on the threshold of Realities, and a little perfume from the garden of the Holy One has already gladdened our nostrils.

Such meaning it is most difficult to express. But where I can, I have indicated it in the Notes, in the Commentary, and with the help of the rhythm and the elevated language of the Text.

The Arabic Text I have had printed from photographic blocks made for me by Master Muḥammad Sharīf. The calligraphy is from the pen of Pīr 'Abdul Ḥamīd, with whom I have been in touch and who has complied with my desire for a bold round hand, with the words clearly separated, the vowel points accurately placed over or under the letter to which they relate, and the verses duly numbered and placed in juxtaposition with their English equivalents. Calligraphy occupies an important place in Muslim Art, and it is my desire that my version should not in any way be deficient in this respect.

I have been fortunate in securing the co-operation of Professor Zafar Iqbal in looking over the proofs of the Arabic Text. In connection with the Anjuman's edition of the Arabic Qur-ān he has devoted much time and thought to the correct punctuation of the Text, and he has also investigated its history and problems. I hope he will some day publish these valuable notes. I have been privileged to see the Anjuman's Text before its formal publication. I consider it the most carefully prepared Text of any produced in India, and I have generally followed it in punctuation and the numbering of verses,—the only points on which any difficulties are likely to arise on the Quranic Text.

It has been my desire to have the printing done in the best style possible with new type, on good glazed paper, and with the best ink procurable. I hope the result will please those who are good enough to approve of the more essential features of the work. The proprietors of the Ripon Press and all their staff, but especially Mr. Badruddīn Badr, their Proof Examiner, have taken a keen interest in their work. The somewhat unusual demands made on their time and attention they have met cheerfully, and I am obliged to them. The publisher, Shaikh Muḥammad Ashraf, has thrown himself heart and soul into his work, and I hope the public will appreciate his efforts.

My plan is to issue each *Sipāra* as it is ready, at intervals of not more than three months. As the work proceeds, I hope it will be possible to accelerate the pace. The paging will be continuous in the subsequent volume. The final binding will be in either three or two volumes. It is my intention to provide a complete analytical Index to the whole. I hope all interested will sign the publisher's subscription order in advance.

One final word to my readers. Read, study, and digest the Holy Book. Read slowly, and let it sink into your heart and soul. Such study will, like virtue, be its own reward. If you find anything in this volume to criticise, please let it not spoil your enjoyment of the rest. If you write to me, quoting chapter and verse, I shall be glad to consider your criticism, but let it not vex you if I exercise my own judgment in deciding for myself. Any corrections accepted will be gratefully acknowledged. On the other hand, if there is something that specially pleases you or helps you, please do not hesitate to write to me. I have given up other interests to help you. It will be a pleasure to know that my labour has not been in vain. If you address me care of my Publisher at his Lahore address, he will always forward the letters to me.

LAHORE

A. YŪSUF 'ALĪ.

4th April, 1934

=18th of the month
of Pilgrimage, 1352 H.

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION, 1938

BESIDES the names which I mentioned in my Preface of 1934, of those who have assisted me in various ways, I have much pleasure in adding a few more at this stage. Khān Ṣaḥib Khawja Latīf Aḥmad, of the Central Provinces Educational Service, has been a diligent and critical reader of the Parts as issued, and his friendly correspondence has enabled me to correct misprints and elucidate some points. Mr. Fadhī Muḥammad Khān, I.F.S., of Lahore, as well as Mian Muḥammad 'Abdullāh, B.A., LL.B., of Lahore, have also been helpful in pointing out misprints. Maulvi Muḥammad Shafī, Principal of the Oriental College, Lahore, has been good-enough to answer most readily my queries on questions of scholarship referred to him. To these and other gentlemen, who have favoured me with correspondence, I have much pleasure in expressing my obligation.

The zeal and energy which my publisher, Shaiḥ Muḥammad Ashraf, has thrown into the work, require renewed acknowledgement. For four years he and I have co-operated in a great undertaking, and all processes connected with it have been carried out by loving Muslim hands.

Since I last greeted my readers collectively I have been able to perform the Pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca and the sacred territory around it and seen with my own eyes the city and territory of Medina, with all the country around and between the holy Cities. I have realised for myself the scenes in which the revelations came which I have humbly sought to interpret. I hope that some glimpses of this experience will have been conveyed to my dear readers. Will they pray that God may give me strength to complete this work and to serve Islam in other ways!

A. YŪSUF 'ALĪ.

COMMENTARIES ON THE QUR-ĀN

QURANIC literature is so voluminous that no single man can compass a perusal of the whole. Besides the extant works there were innumerable works written for special groups of people or from special points of view or for special purposes, which have perished. And more works are being added every day. The activity in this line has never been greater than it is now.

There is no Book in the world in whose service so much talent, so much labour, so much time and money have been expended as has been the case with the Qur-ān. A mere glance at Imām Suyūṭī's (d. 911 H.) *Itqān* or Ḥajī Khalīfa's (d. 1059 H.) *Kashf-uz-ẓunūn* will show the encyclopædic volume of the Qurānic sciences in their day.

Since then the volume has continued to go on increasing, although it must be admitted that the quality of the later literature on the subject leaves much to be desired. With the retrogression of the Islamic nations in original work in science, art, and philosophy, and the concomitant limitation in their outlook and experience, in various phases of intellectual and spiritual life, has come a certain limitation in the free spirit of research and enquiry. The new Renaissance of Islam which is just beginning will, it is hoped, sweep away cobwebs and let in the full light of reason and understanding.

The need for an explanation of the verses of the Qur-ān arose quite early. Even before the whole of the Qur-ān was revealed, people used to ask the Apostle all sorts of questions as to the meaning of certain words in the verses revealed, or of their bearing on problems as they arose, or details of certain historical or spiritual matters on which they sought more light. The Apostle's answers were carefully stored in the memory of the Companions (*aṣ-ḥāb*) and were afterwards written down. In the next generation, the *Tābi'īn*, were those who had not personally conversed with the Apostle, like the Companions, but had conversed with the Companions and learned from them. Subsequent generations always went back to establish a chain of evidence through the *Tābi'īn* and the Companions. Through them grew up the science of *Ḥadīth* or Traditions. As this literature grew, it became necessary to establish strict rules by which the evidence could be examined and tested, so as to separate that which was considered to be established from that which was doubtful or weak, and that which was to be rejected as unproved. In the evolution of the science of *Ḥadīth*, it became clear that even among the Companions certain persons had better memories than others, or better opportunities of becoming really acquainted with the Apostle's true meaning, or in other ways, a better title to be called true expositors, and the number of such persons came to be limited to ten only. Similarly the claims of the *Tābi'īn* came to be examined and graded, and so on. Thus arose a new science, in which the names and positions of persons in *Ḥadīth* literature were examined biographically and other ways.

The *Ḥadīth* literature dealt with all sorts of matters, including Theology, Ethics, and Exegesis (explanation of the Qur-ān). Exegesis soon became an independent science by itself and was called *Tafsīr*, and the sphere of *Tafsīr* itself began to widen as the experience and knowledge of the Arabs and Arabic writers began to increase. Besides the examination of correct traditions from various kinds and grades of authorities, it began to examine the meaning of words philologically, collecting a vast amount of learning as to root meanings, the usage of the Quraish tribe of Arabs, to which the Apostle belonged, the usage and meaning of words in the purest original Arabic before it became mixed up with foreign idioms and usages by the use of the Arabic language by non-Arabs in Islam, and by the influence of the enormous geographical expansion of the Arab race in the first few centuries of Islam. The increasing knowledge of history and of Jewish and Christian legends enabled

the Commentators to illustrate the Text of the Holy Book with reference to these. Sometimes the amount of Jewish stuff (some of it absurd), which found its way into the Commentaries, was out of all proportion to its importance and relevance, and gave rise to the legend, which has been exploited by polemical Christian and Jewish writers, that Islam was built up on an imperfect knowledge of Christianity and Judaism, or that it accepts as true the illustrative legends from the Talmud or the Midrash or various fantastic schools of Christianity. Then came philosophy and the mystic doctrine of the *Ṣūfī* schools. The development of the science of *kalām* (built on formal logic), and its further off shoot the *ʿIlm-ul-ʿAqāid* (the philosophical exposition of the grounds of our beliefs) introduced further elements on the intellectual side, while *Tāawil* (esoteric exposition of the hidden or inner meaning) introduced elements on the spiritual side, based on a sort of transcendental intuition of the expositor. The *Ṣūfī* mystics at least adhered to the rules of their own Orders, which were very strict. But many of the non-*Ṣūfī* writers on *Tāawil* indulged in an amount of licence in interpretation which has rightly called forth a protest on the part of the more sober *ʿUlamā*.

For my part I agree with this protest. While freely reserving the right of individual judgment on the part of every earnest writer, I think the art of interpretation must stick as closely as possible to the text which it seeks to interpret. Every serious writer and thinker has a right to use all the knowledge and experience he possesses in the service of the Qur-ān. But he must not mix up his own theories and conclusions, however reasonable, with the interpretation of the Text itself, which is usually perfectly perspicuous, as it claims it to be. Our difficulties in interpretation often arise from various causes, of which I will mention just a few :

(1) Arabic words in the Text have acquired other meanings than those which were understood by the Apostle and his Companions. All living languages undergo such transformations. The early Commentators and Philologists went into these matters with a very comprehensive grasp, and we must accept their conclusions. Where they are not unanimous, we must use our judgment and historic sense in adopting the interpretation of that authority which appeals to us most. We must not devise new verbal meanings.

(2) Even since the early Commentators wrote, the Arabic language has further developed, and later Commentators often abandon the interpretations of earlier Commentators without sufficient reason. In exercising our selective judgment in such cases it would be a good rule to prefer the earlier to the later interpretation, though, where a later writer has reviewed the earlier interpretations and given good reasons for his own view, he has an advantage which we must freely concede to him.

(3) Classical Arabic has a vocabulary in which the meaning of each root-word is so comprehensive that it is difficult to interpret it in a modern analytical language word for word, or by the use of the same word in all places where the original word occurs in the Text. A striking example is furnished by the word *Ṣabr*, about which see my notes on ii. 45 and ii. 153. Even though one particular shade of meaning may be predominant in any particular passage, the others are latent. So in a ray of light, when a prism analyses it, we may look at a portion of the field where a particular colour predominates, but other colours do not escape our glance. An Arabic word is often a full ray of light ; when a translator looks at it through the prism of a modern analytical language, he misses a great deal of its meaning by confining his attention to one particular colour. European translators have often failed in this respect and sometimes even been landed in absurdities because these delicate rich tones are not studied in their languages or literatures, and they do not look for them or appreciate them in the best examples of Oriental style. If they despise them or think them fantastic, they had best leave the interpretation of Oriental literatures alone. This is all the more so in religious or spiritual literature. No human language can possibly be adequate for the expression of the highest spiritual thought. Such thought must be expressed symbolically in terse and comprehensive words, out of which people will perceive just as much light and colour as their spiritual eyes are capable of perceiving. It is possible that their prism will only show them a dark blue while a whole glorious symphony of colours is hidden from their eyes. And so it comes about that through

the prism of a clever English translation, poor 'Umar (Omar) Khayyām emerges as a sensualist and cynic who sees no higher purpose in life than drinking wine, dallying with women, and holding up his hands in despair at "this sorry scheme of things entire." And so the parables of stern morality in the Quran, its mystic earnestness, and its pictures of future beatitude are distorted into idle fables, incoherent effusions, and a sensual paradise!

(4) An opposite error sometimes arises because in certain matters the rich vocabulary of the Qur-ān distinguishes between things and ideas of a certain kind by special words, for which there is only a general word in English. Instances are: *Rahmān* and *Rahīm* (Most Merciful); see i. 1. n.; *afā*, *safāha*, *ḡafara* (to forgive); see ii. 109 n.; and the various words for Creation; see ii. 117 n. The fact is that it gives us a very limited idea of God's Mercy, when we only use the English word "mercy": the Quranic idea implies not only pity and forgiveness but the Grace which protects us and keeps us from sin, and indeed guides us to the light of His "Countenance." So the "forgiveness" of God is a thing totally different in quality from the forgiveness which a man can give to his brother man: the equation implied in "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us" is a misleading fallacy. So, again, "Creation" is not just a simple process done by God at some remote time and finished with: the Quranic idea implies various processes and the continuous presence and activity of God in His Creation.

(5) God's purpose is eternal, and His plan is perfect, but man's intelligence is limited at its very best. In the same individual it grows and declines according to the strength of his powers and the width of his experience. If we take mankind collectively, the variations are even greater from age to age and from people to people. There is thus no finality in human interpretation. And in the thing interpreted—God's Creation—there is constant flux and change. So that the impact of the one on the other must yield diverse results. The view of Kunchinjunga must vary infinitely according to the position of the observer, even if Kunchinjunga remained the same. But if Kunchinjunga itself varies, there is a double cause of variation in the view. So I believe in progressive interpretation, in the need for understanding and explaining spiritual matters from different angles. The difficulties that confront me may not be the same as those that confront you. The problems which our age has to meet may not be the same as the problems which puzzled earnest minds of the fourth or sixth or later centuries of the Hijra. Therefore it is no merit to hug the solutions offered in the fourth or sixth centuries when our souls cry out in hunger for solace in the fourteenth century of the Hijra.

The distinction drawn by Commentators between matters of report (*manqūlāt*) and matters of judgment (*ma'qūlāt*) is a sound one, and I heartily accept it. But I would extend the scope of the *ma'qūlāt* far beyond questions of idiom and meaning. In the former the issues are: what actually happened, or what was actually said, or how were certain things done? Here the closer we go back to contemporary authority, the better. In the latter, the issues are: what is the bearing of this truth on our lives, or what illustration helps us best to grasp this, or what is the wisdom we can extract from this? In such matters, the closer we come to our own circumstances and experiences, the better. It is not only our right but our duty to seek honestly our own solutions, and while we respect authority, we must not neglect or despise the gifts which God has accumulated for us through the ages.

The principles on which I have worked may be briefly stated. In matters of philology and language I accept the best authority among those who were competent to deal with these questions: the older the better. In matters of narration, contemporary authorities are best, subject to such corrections as have to be applied for their points of view. As to the particular occasions on which particular verses were revealed, the information is interesting and valuable from a historical point of view, and our older writers have collected ample material for it. But to lay too much stress on it to-day puts the picture out of all perspective. The Qur-ān was not revealed for a particular occasion only, but for all time. The particular occasion is now past. Our chief interest now is to see how it can guide us in our present lives. Its meaning is so manifold, and when tested, it is so true, that we should be

wise to concentrate on the matters that immediately help us. So in nature plants seek out of the soil just that food which gives them nourishment. There is plenty of other food left in the soil, which other plants take, which can digest it. In matters of remote history or folk lore, we must take the results of the latest researches. In interpreting Jewish or Christian legends or beliefs we must go to Jewish or Christian sources, but by way of illustration only, not in the direction of incorporating such beliefs or systems. Though they were true in their original purity, we are not sure of the form which they subsequently took, and in any case the fuller light of the sun obscures the lesser light of the stars.

In the application of spiritual truths to our own times and our own lives, we must use every kind of knowledge, science, and experience which we possess, but we must not obtrude irrelevant matter into our discussions. Let us take simple examples. When we speak of the rising of sun in the east, we do not go on to reconcile the expression with the Copernican system of astronomy. What we *mean* is as true under the Copernican system as it was under the Ptolemæic system. When we speak of the endless plains of India, we are not put on our defence because the earth is round. Nor will such poetic expressions as the seven firmaments raise questions as to the nature of space in modern astronomy. Man's intellect is given to him to investigate the nature of the physical world around him. He forms different conceptions of it at different times. Spiritual truths are quite independent of the question which of these conceptions are true. They deal with matters which are beyond the ken of physical science. In explaining or illustrating them we shall use such language as is current among the people to whom we speak.

Let me set out the names of the most important *Tafsirs*, especially those to which I have from time to time referred. They are not, however, in any sense my authorities. They belong to widely different schools of thought, and some of them express extreme views with which I do not agree. I only adopt the general sense of accepted Commentaries.

(1) The monumental work of Abū Ja'far Muḥammad Ibn Jarir Ṭabarī, d. 310 H. A perfect mine of historical information, as the author was both a historian and a Traditionist. Copies are not easily accessible.

(2) The *Mufradāt*, a dictionary of difficult words and phrases in the Qur-ān, by Abul-Qāsim Ḥusain Rāṣib, of Ispahān, d. 503 H. Also explains allusions.

(3) The *Kashshāf*, by Abul-Qāsim Maḥmūd Zamakhsharī, of Khwārizm, d. 538 H. Very full in the explanation of words and idioms; takes a decidedly rational and ethical view of doctrine. Numerous Commentaries have been written on this Commentary.

(4) *Tafsīr Kabīr*, by Fakhr-ud-dīn Muḥammad Rāzi, d. 606 H. Very comprehensive. Strong in interpretations from a Ṣūfī or spiritual point of view.

(5) *Anwār-ut-Tanzil*, by Qādhī Naṣīr-ud-dīn Abū Sa'id Baidhawī, d. 685 H. Has drawn largely from the *Mufradāt*, the *Kashshāf*, and the *Tafsīr Kabīr*, but incorporates a good deal of original matter. A very popular Commentary, on which again numerous Commentaries have been written.

(6) The *Tafsīr* of Abul-Fidā Ismā'il Ibn Kathīr, d. 774 H. Voluminous, but has great authority among the 'Ulamā.

(7) *Itqān fī 'ulūm-il-Qur-ān*, by Jalāl-ud-dīn Suyūṭī, d. 911 H. A comprehensive review of the sciences of the Qur-ān, being an introduction to his *Majma'-ul Bahrain*.

(8) *Tafsīr Jalālain*.—Written by the two Jalāl-ud-dīns, one of whom was the author of the *Itqān*, mentioned above, d. 911 H. A concise and meritorious Commentary, on which again a number of Commentaries have been written.

(9) Our country has produced some notable scholars in the realm of *Tafsir*. They wrote in Arabic and Persian, and the latter ones have written in Urdu.

The earliest I can trace is Shaikh 'Alī Ibn Aḥmad Mahāimī (of Māhim, near Bombay), d. H. 835=1432 A.D., author of the *Tafsir Raḥmānī*. Almost contemporary with him was 'Allāma Shams-ud-dīn, of Daulatābād and Delhi, who lived during the brilliant reign of Ibrāhīm Sharqī of Jaunpur (1400—1440 A.D.). He wrote in Persian. During the nineteenth century, the famous Muḥaddīth of Delhi, Shāh Walī-Ullāh, and his two sons Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz (d. 1824) and Shāh 'Abdul Qādir (d. 1826) wrote both translations and Commentaries. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz wrote in Persian and Shāh 'Abdul Qādir in Urdu. The Urdu Commentary of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān of Aligarh (d. 1898) has not met the approval of the 'Ulamā. On the other hand the more recent Urdu Commentary of Maulvi 'Abdul Ḥaqq, the *Tafsir Ḥaqqānī*, has passed through several editions, is quite modern in tone and manageable in bulk, and is widely circulated in India. I have derived much instruction from it and have used it constantly. The Commentary of Maulvi Abul Kalām Azād has been planned on a spacious scale and has not yet been finished.

(10) The Modernist school in Egypt got a wise lead from the late Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh (d. 1323 H.=1905 A.D.), whose unfinished Commentary is being completed by Muḥammad Rashīd Ridhā, the talented editor of the *Manār* newspaper. The work of Shaikh Tanrāwī, Jauharī, a pupil of 'Abduh, finds the "jewels" of the Qur-ān and of the sciences mutually illuminative, and suggests many new lines of thought. 'Allāma Farīd Wajdī is also spoken of as a good Modern Commentator: I have not yet been able to get a copy of his work.

(11) It has been said that the Qur-ān is its own best Commentary. As we proceed with the study of the Book, we find how true this is. A careful comparison and collation of passages from the Qur-ān removes many difficulties. Use a good Concordance, such as the one I have named among the Works of Reference, and you will find that one passage throws light on another.

TRANSLATIONS OF THE QUR-ĀN

ALMOST all languages spoken by Muslims have translations of the Qur-ān in them. Usually the Text is printed with the Translation. If the language is undeveloped, many of the Arabic words of the Qur-ān are taken over bodily into it for want of corresponding words in the language. Even in cultivated languages like Persian or Turkish, the introduction of religious terms from Arabic gave a body of words which were common to the whole Islamic world, and thus cemented that unity of the Muslim Brotherhood which is typified by the Qibla. Where the notion itself is new to the speakers of polished languages, they are glad to borrow the Arabic word expressing that notion and all the associations connected with it. Such a word is *Qibla*. Where the language is undeveloped, the translation is nothing more than a rough explanation of the Arabic Text. The translation has neither grammatical finish nor a form which can stand independently by itself. That is what happened with the earlier Urdu translations. They were really rough explanations. The ambition of every learned Muslim is to read the Qur-ān in Arabic. The ambition of every Muslim is to read the *sounds* of the Arabic Text. I wish that his or her ambition were also to *understand* the Qur-ān, either in Arabic or in the mother tongue or some well-developed tongue which he or she understands. Hence the need for good and accurate translations.

The translations into non-European languages known to me are: Persian, Turkish, Urdu; Tamil (used by Moplas), Pashto (for Afghans), Bengali, Malay, some of the languages of the Eastern Archipelago, and some of the African languages. I believe there is also a Chinese (dialectical) translation.

The earliest Urdu translation was by Shāh 'Abdul Qādir of Delhi (d. 1826). He has already been mentioned among the Indian Commentators. Since then numerous Urdu translations have followed, some of which have been left incomplete. Among the complete ones, much used at the present day, may be mentioned those of Shāh Rafi'-ud-dīn of Delhi, Shāh Ashraf 'Alī Thānawāī, and Maulvi Naẓir Aḥmad (d. 1912). Personally I prefer the last. The projected Urdu translation by Ḥakīm Aḥmad Shujā' has not yet been published.

Before the development of the modern European vernaculars, the cultivated language of Europe was Latin. A Latin translation was made for the Monastery of Clugny about 1143 (in the sixth century of the Hijra) but not published till 1543. The place of publication was Basle and the publisher Bibliander. This was translated into Italian, German, and Dutch. Schweigger's German translation was published at Nuremberg (Bavaria) in 1616. A French translation by Du Ryer was published at Paris in 1647, and a Russian one at St. Petersburg in 1776. Savary's French translation appeared in 1783, and Kasimirski's French translation (which has passed through several editions) first appeared in 1840, the French interest in Islam having been stimulated by French conquests in Algeria and North Africa. The Germans have followed up Schweigger with Boysen's translation in 1773, Wahl's in 1828, and Ullmann's (first edition) in 1840. I believe the Aḥmadiya Association of Lahore have in hand a fresh translation into German and Dutch.

Meanwhile Maracci had produced in 1689 a Latin version of the Qur-ān with the Arabic Text and quotations from various Arabic Commentaries, carefully selected and garbled, so as to give the worst possible impression of Islam to Europe. Maracci was a learned man, and there is no pretence about the object he had in view, viz., to discredit Islam by an elaborate show of quotations from Muslim authorities themselves. Maracci was himself a Confessor to Pope Innocent XI; his work is dedicated to the holy Roman Emperor Leopold I; and he introduces it by an introductory volume containing what he calls a "Refutation of the Qur-ān."

The first English translation by A. Ross was but a translation of the first French translation of Du Ryer of 1647, and was published a few years after Du Ryer's. George Sale's translation (1734) was based on Maracci's Latin version, and even his notes and his Preliminary Discourse are based mainly on Maracci. Considering that Maracci's object was to discredit Islam in the eyes of Europe, it is remarkable that Sale's translation should be looked upon as a standard translation in the English-speaking world, and should pass through edition after edition, being even included in the series called the

Chandos Classics and receiving the benediction of Sir E. Denison Ross. The Rev. J. M. Rodwell arranged the Sūras in a rough chronological order. His translation was first published in 1861. Though he tries to render the idiom fairly, his notes show the mind of a Christian clergyman, who was more concerned to "show up" the Book than to appreciate or expound its beauties. Prof. E. H. Palmer's translation (first published in 1876) suffers from the idea that the Qur-ān ought to be translated into colloquial language. He failed to realise the beauty and grandeur of style in the original Arabic. To him that style was "rude and rugged": we may more justifiably call his translation careless and slipshod.

The amount of mischief done by these versions of non-Muslim and anti-Muslim writers has led Muslim writers to venture into the field of English translation. The first Muslim to undertake an English translation was Dr. Muḥammad 'Abdul Ḥakīm Khān, of Patiala, 1905. Mīrzā Hairat of Delhi also published a translation, (Delhi 1919): the Commentary which he intended to publish in a separate volume of introduction was, as far as I know, never published. My dear friend, the late Nawwāb 'Imād-ul-mulk Saiyid Ḥussain Bilgramī of Hyderabad, Deccan, translated a portion, but he did not live to complete his work. The Aḥmadiya Sect has also been active in the field. Its Qādiyān Anjuman published a version of the first Sīpāra in 1915. Apparently no more was published. Its Lahore Anjuman has published Maulvi Muḥammad Ali's translation (first edition in 1917), which was passed through more than one edition. It is a scholarly work, and is equipped with adequate explanatory matter in the notes and the Preface, and a fairly full Index. But the English of the Text is decidedly weak, and is not likely to appeal to those who know no Arabic. There are two other Muslim translations of great merit. But they have been published without the Arabic Text. Hafiz Gulām Sarwar's translation (published in 1930 or 1929) deserves to be better known than it is. He has provided fairly full summaries of the Sūras, section by section, but he has practically no notes to his Text. I think such notes are necessary for a full understanding of the Text. In many cases the Arabic words and phrases are so pregnant of meaning that a Translator would be in despair unless he were allowed to explain all that he understands by them. Mr. Marmaduke Fickthall's translation was published in 1930. He is an English Muslim, a literary man of standing, and an Arabic scholar. But he has added very few notes to elucidate the Text. His rendering is "almost literal": it can hardly be expected that it can give an adequate idea of a Book which (in his own words) can be described as "that inimitable symphony the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy." Perhaps the attempt to catch something of that symphony in another language is impossible. Greatly daring, I have made that attempt. We do not blame an artist who tries to catch in his picture something of the glorious light of a spring landscape.

The English language being widely spread over the world, many people interested in Islam will get their ideas of the Qur-ān from English translations. It is good that qualified Muslims should make the attempt to present the picture which their own mental and spiritual vision presents to themselves. The Indian educational system has enthroned English as the common language of culture for a population of 350 millions. The most educated of its 80 millions of Muslims—unless they know Arabic—look to English as the most cultivated medium of expression. Their non-Muslim fellow-countrymen judge—usually misjudge—their religion by the material which is available to them in English. We should improve and increase this material as much as we can and from as many points of view as we can. Some Muslim nations—like the Turks—have now determined to provide their religious literature (including the Holy Book) in their own national language. In order to keep them in touch with the thought and points of view of their brethren in faith, the English language would under present conditions be the most convenient medium. These are the considerations which have moved me to undertake the stupendous task of providing an English Interpretation of the Qur-ān. I pray for strength and light, so that I may be enabled to succeed in this service to Islam.

USEFUL WORKS OF REFERENCE

THE wide compass of the Qur-ān makes it necessary to consult works of reference on almost every conceivable subject, to enable us to elucidate the various points that arise. To deal adequately with such a Book, the widest reading is necessary as well as the most varied experience in life. But the interests of readers require that a handy Commentary should not roam too far afield. Bearing this in view the three essential kinds of books would be : (a) Previous Commentaries ; (b) previous Translations ; (c) Dictionaries and General works of Reference, easily accessible. I have set out (a) and (b) in the previous two Notes. I note a few under (c) :—

1. Imām Abul-Qāsim Ḥusain Rāḡib's *Mufradāt* : a concise Arabic dictionary of words and phrases in the Qur-ān. Already mentioned under Commentaries.
2. The well-known Arabic Dictionary, *Qāmūs*.
3. The well-known Arabic Dictionary, *Lisān-ul-'Arab*.
4. The concise Arabic-Persian Dictionary, *Ṣurāh*.
5. J. Penrice's *Dictionary & Glossary of the Koran*.
6. E. W. Lane : *English-Arabic Lexicon*.
7. Imām Jalāl-ud-dīn Suyūṭī's *Itqān fi 'ulūm-il-Qur-ān* ; a veritable encyclopædia of Quranic sciences.
8. Nöldeke and Schwally : *Geschichte des Qorans*. A German Essay on the Chronology of the Qur-ān. Its criticisms and conclusions are from a non-Muslim point of view and to us not always acceptable, though it is practically the last word of European scholarship on the subject.
9. *Encyclopædia of Islam*. Nearly completed. Very unequal in its various parts.
10. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 14th edition. A great advance on previous editions, as regards the attention it devotes to Arabic learning.
11. Hughes's *Dictionary of Islam*. Out of date, but still useful.
12. Ibn Hishām : *Sīrat-ur-Rasūl*. A fairly detailed Life of the Apostle.
13. Maulvi Shiblī Nu'mānī (d. 1914=1334 H.) : *Sīrat-un-Nabī* (an Urdu Life of the Apostle).
14. *Fath-ur-Rahmān*, an Arabic Concordance to the Qur-ān, by Faḡh-ullah Bik Ḥasanī, printed in Cairo in 1346 H. Full and well arranged, and easy to use.

TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC WORDS AND NAMES

THE following table shows the system which I have followed in transliterating the letters of the Arabic alphabet :—

ا	{Consonantal	a	ط	.....	t
ء	{ sound }		ظ	.....	z
آ	Long vowel *	ā	ع	.....	' (Inverted apostrophe)
ب	.....	b	غ	.....	g
ت	.....	t	ف	.....	f
ث	.....	th	ق	.....	q
ج	.....	j	ك	.....	k
ح	.....	h	ل	.....	l
خ	.....	kh	م	.....	m
د	.....	d	ن	.....	n
ذ	.....	z	هـ	.....	h
ر	.....	r	و	consonant	w
ز	.....	z	و	long vowel *	ū
س	.....	s	و	diphthong	au
ش	.....	sh	ي	consonant	y
ص	.....	s	ي	long vowel *	i
ض	.....	dh	ي	diphthong	ai
Short vowels : َ (fatḥa)			a		
ِ (kasra)			i		
ُ (dhamma)			u		

1. For the *hamzā* (ء) I have used no distinctive sign. An apostrophe for it and an inverted apostrophe for the 'ain (ع), or *vice versa*, is confusing to English readers. As a moved consonant, it is sufficiently shown in English by the long or short vowel which moves it, e.g., *ab*, *Raūf*. Where it is a hiatus preceded by a *fatḥa*, I have shown it by a second *a*: thus, *Iqraa*, the cave of *Hiraa*. In other cases it has not been possible to show it without using a distinctive sign. The name of the Holy Book is usually written *Qurān*; but I prefer to write *Qur-ān*.

2. The final *h* preceded by the short *a* is scarcely pronounced, and I have left it out. Hence *Sūra*, *Fātiḥa*, *Hijra*, etc., where the Arabic spelling would require *Sūrah*, *Fātiḥah*, *Hijrah*, etc.

3. In internationalised words and names I have used the spelling ordinarily current in English; e.g., *Mecca*, *Medina*, *Maulvi*, *Urdu*, *Islam*, *Israel*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*. Here the boundary is thin and rather ill-defined, and possibly my practice and that of my proof-readers have not been absolutely uniform.

4. Some names, e.g., *Ishmael*, *Hagar*, etc., have acquired a contemptuous association in their European forms, while the persons they represent are sacred personages held in great honour in Islam. I have, therefore, avoided the European forms and used the Arabic forms, *Ismā'il*, *Hājar*, etc.

*Where it is really pronounced long. Hence *khalaqnā-kum* but *khalaqnal-insān*; *Abū Sufyān* but *Abul-Qāsim*; *fin-nār* but *fi-hi*.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

I have not used many abbreviations. Those I have used are shown below :—

A.D.	=Anno Domini=year of the Christian Calendar.
A.H.	=Anno Hegiræ=year of the Hijra.
Bk.	=Book.
C.	=The running Commentary, in rhythmic prose.
Cf.	=compare.
d.	=date of death of an author (to show the age in which he lived).
Deut.	=The Book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament.
E. B.	= <i>Encyclopaedia Britannica</i> , 14th edition.
e.g.	= <i>exempli gratia</i> =for example.
Exod.	=The Book of Exodus, Old Testament.
Gen.	=The Book of Genesis, Old Testament.
H.	=year of the Hijra.
H.G.S.	=Ḥāfiz Gulām Sarwar's Translation of the Qur-ān.
i.e.	= <i>id est</i> =that is.
Josh.	=Book of Joshua, Old Testament.
Matt.	=Gospel of St. Matthew, New Testament.
M.M.A.	=Maulvi Muḥammad 'Alī's Translation of the Qur-ān.
M.P.	=Mr. M. Pickthall's <i>The Meaning of the Glorious Koran</i> .
n.	=note.
nn.	=notes.
Num.	=The Book of Numbers, Old Testament.
p.	=page.
pp.	=pages.
Q.	=Qur-ān.
xx. 25	=Qur-ān, Sūra 20, verse 25.
Rev.	=Revelation of St. John, New Testament.
S.	=sūra.
v.	=verse.
vv.	=verses.
viz.	= <i>videlicet</i> =namely.
ۛۛ, ۛۛ, etc.	=the end of one Sīpāra, two Sīpāras, etc. A Sīpāra is arithmetically the 30th part of the Qur-ān.

PUNCTUATION MARKS IN THE ARABIC TEXT

THE punctuation marks in the Arabic Text have been worked out by our 'Ulama with great care and minute attention to details. The earliest manuscripts had few or no punctuation marks. Their growth and development furnish an interesting history, on which I hope Professor Zafar Iqbāl, who has gone into the question, will publish his notes. In classical Europe, Greek had practically no punctuation marks. Later Latin had one or two rudimentary ones. In modern Europe they developed with printing. Aldus Manutius (16th century) was the first to work out a regular system. The Muslims were much earlier in the field for Quranic purposes, although in current Urdu, Persian, or Arabic, punctuation is not a strong point.

Quranic punctuation is an elaborate system, in which three kinds of marks are used. First, there are marks to show the variations in the systems of Qirāat. The most important of these is what is known as the *Mu'ānaqa* معانقه. This literally means the action of two persons embracing each shoulder to shoulder, as in the ceremonious salute at the celebration of 'Id. The technical meaning in connection with the Quranic text is that a certain word or expression so marked can be construed as going either with the words or expressions preceding it or with those following it. The word or expression in question is indicated by three dots ∴ placed before and after it, above other punctuation marks if any. An example will be found in ii. 2, where the word *fi-hi* may be construed either as referring to the word *raib* in the preceding clause, or to the word *hudan* in the succeeding clause. Either or both constructions are admissible. Passages where such constructions occur are indicated in the margin of the Arabic Text: by the abbreviation مع, where this was worked out by the earlier Commentators (*Mutaqaddimīn*), or by the word معانقه in full, where it was worked out by the later Commentators (*Mutaakhkhirīn*). The numeral above it shows the serial number of the *Mu'ānaqa* of each series.

Secondly, there are marginal marks showing division into sections or paragraphs. These are denoted by the letter 'ain (ع) in the margin, and are explained under the heading "Divisions of the Qur'an."

Thirdly, there are the ordinary punctuation marks in the Text. A knowledge of the most important of these is necessary for an intelligent reading of the Text. Most important of all is a big circle ○ to denote the end of one Āyat and the beginning of another. If the end of the Āyat is not also the end of a sentence, the mark of a smaller stop is put above it. Where one mark is put on the top of another, the former governs the latter. A warning not to stop is denoted by لا. The letter م (lāzim) shows that a stop is absolutely necessary; otherwise the sense is spoilt. This is so important that it is also shown prominently in the margin as وقف لازم (jāiz) ج. There are other marks to show the extent to which a stop is permissible, e.g., for taking breath, etc., or where option is allowed, whether it is better to stop or not to stop. The letter ط (mutlaq) denotes a full stop, i.e., the end of a sentence, but not the end of an argument, as in the case of a paragraph or section (ع).

DIVISIONS OF THE QUR-ĀN

THE reading of the Qur-ān is considered a pious duty by every Muslim and is actually performed in practice by every literate person, man, woman, and child. For the convenience of those who wish to complete the whole reading in a given time, the whole Text is divided into thirty equal parts, or seven equal parts. The thirtieth Part is called *juz-un* in Arabic, and *Sipāra* or simply *Pāra* in Persian and Urdu. If you read a *Sipāra* every day, you complete the whole reading in a month of thirty days. The seventh part is called a *Manzil*. If one is read every day, the whole is completed in a week. Usually the arithmetical quarters of a *Sipāra* (one-fourth, one-half, three-quarters) are also marked in the Arabic copies as *Ar-rub'*, *An-nisf*, and *Ath-thalātha*.

According to subject-matter, the division is different. The whole of the Qur-ān is arranged in 114 Sūras of very unequal size. The Sūras are numbered and the consecutive number is shown just before the title of the Sūra, both in Arabic and English. In Arabic, the figure just after the title shows the chronological order as usually accepted by Muslim writers. Each Sūra consists of a number of Āyats. Sūra I contains 7 Āyats and Sūra II contains 286. For the meaning of Sūra and Āyat see. C. 42 nn. 15-17. The most convenient form of quotation is to name the Sūra and the Āyat: thus ii. 120 means the 120th Āyat of the second Sūra. A Sūra is usually spoken of as a Chapter in English, but that translation is hardly satisfactory. If you examine the order you will find that each Sūra is a step in a gradation. I have left the word untranslated, as a technical term in our religious literature. The Āyat or verse division is usually determined by the rhythm and cadence in the Arabic Text. Sometimes an Āyat contains many sentences. Sometimes a sentence is divided by a break in an Āyat. But usually there is a pause in meaning at the end of an Āyat.

A division of the Sūra into Sections is shown in all Arabic Texts. These are logical divisions according to meaning. The word translated "Section" is in Arabic *Rukū'*, a "bowing of the head." The end of a *Rukū'* is shown in Arabic by •. Usually three figures are written with ع. The top figure shows the number of *Rukū'*s completed in that Sūra. The middle figure shows the number of Āyats in the *Rukū'* just completed. The bottom figure shows the number of *Rukū'*s completed in that *Sipāra*, irrespective of Sūras. For example, the first ع in *Sipāra* II which

continues Sūra II from *Sipāra* I is usually marked ع¹². It means that at that

point 17 *Rukū'*s of Sūra II have been completed, that the *Rukū'* of which it marks the close contains 6 Āyats, and that it is the first *Rukū'* that falls in *Sipāra* II. I have further marked the subdivision of *Rukū'*s into shorter paragraphs where necessary, by using in the English text a bold flowery Initial: e.g., see the initial **A** in ii. 6 or the initial **W** in ii. 35.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

INTRODUCTION

- C. 1.—Glory to God Most High, full of Grace and Mercy ;
He created All, including Man.
To Man He gave a special place in His Creation.
He honoured man to be His Agent,
And to that end, endued him with understanding
Purified his affections and gave him spiritual insight ;
So that man should understand Nature,
Understand himself,
And know God through His wondrous Signs,
And glorify Him in Truth, reverence, and unity.
- C. 2.—For the fulfilment of this great trust
Man was further given a Will,
So that his acts should reflect God's universal Will and Law,
And his mind, freely choosing,
Should experience the sublime joy
Of being in harmony with the Infinite,
And with the great drama of the world around him,
And with his own spiritual growth.
- C. 3.—But, created though he was in the best of moulds,
Man fell from Unity when his Will was warped,
And he chose the crooked path of Discord,
And sorrow and pain, selfishness and degradation,
Ignorance and hatred, despair and unbelief
Poisoned his life, and he saw shapes of evil
In the physical, moral, and spiritual world,
And in himself.
- C. 4.—Then did his soul rise against himself,
And his self-discord made discord between kith and kin :
Men began to fear the strong and oppress the weak
To boast in prosperity, and curse in adversity,
And to flee each other, pursuing phantoms,
For the truth and reality of Unity.
Was gone from their minds.
- C. 5.—When men spread themselves over the earth,
And became many nations,
Speaking diverse languages,
And observing diverse customs and laws ;

The evils became multiplied,
 As one race or nation
 Became alienated from another,
 The Brotherhood of Man was now doubly forgotten,—
 First, between individuals, and secondly, between nations.
 Arrogance, selfishness, and untruth
 Were sown and reaped in larger fields ;
 And Peace, Faith, Love and Justice
 Were obscured over masses of men,
 As large tracts of land are starved
 Of sunshine by clouds floating far on high.

C. 6.—But God, in His infinite mercy and love,
 Who Forgives and guides individuals and nations,
 And turns to good even what seems to us evil,
 Never forsakes the struggling soul that turns to Him,
 Nor the groups of men and women
 Who join together to obey His Will and Law
 And strengthen each other in unity and truth,
 Nor the Nations that dwell
 In mountain or valley, heat or cold,
 In regions fertile or arid,
 In societies that roam over land or seas,
 Or hunt, or tend flocks, or till the soil,
 Or seek the seas for food or oil or fat or gems,
 Or dig out from the bowels of the earth
 Precious stones or metals or stored-up heat and energy,
 Or practise arts and crafts, or produce abundant wealth
 By machines of ingenious workmanship,
 Or live a frugal life of contemplation :
 For all are children of One God,
 And share His loving care
 And must be brought within the pale
 Of His eternal unity and harmony.

C. 7.—And so this light of eternal Unity
 Has shone in all ages and among all nations,
 Through chosen Apostles of God, who came
 As men to dwell among men,
 To share their joys and sorrows,
 To suffer for them and with them,—
 Aye, and to suffer more than falls
 To ordinary mortal lot,—
 That so their message and their life

Might fulfil the eternal
And unchanging purpose of the Most High,—
To lead man to his noblest destiny.

C. 8.—Ever this eternal light of Unity,
This mystic light of God's own Will,
Has shone and shines with undiminished splendour,
The names of many Messengers are inscribed
In the records of many nations and many tongues,
And many were the forms in which their message was delivered,
According to the needs of the times and the understanding of the people;
And manifold were the lives of the Messengers.
And manifold also was the response of their people;
But they all witnessed to the One Truth:
Of God's unity, might, grace and love.

C. 9.—As the records of man are imperfect,
And the memory of man unstable:
The names of many of these messengers
Are known in one place and not in another,
Or among one people and not among others;
And some of their names may have perished utterly;
But their message stands one and indivisible,
Even though it may have been forgotten,
Or twisted by ignorance, error, superstition or perversity;
Or misunderstood in the blinding light
Of time or tortuous Circumstance.

C. 10.—Many were the faiths in the composite world
Of Western Asia, Northern Africa, and Europe,
And many were the fragments of ancient wisdom,
Saved, transformed, renewed, or mingled;
And many new streams of wisdom were poured through the crucibles
Of noble minds,— prophets, poets, preachers,
Philosophers, and thinking men of action;
And many were the conflicts, and many
The noble attempts reaching out towards Unity,
And many were the subtle influences
Interchanged with the other worlds
Of further and Eastern Asia,—
Aye, and perchance with the scattered Isles
Of the Pacific and the world between
The Atlantic and the Pacific.

C. 11.—At length came the time when the Voice of Unity

Should speak and declare to the People,
 Without the need of Priests or Priestcraft,
 Without miracles save those that happen
 Now and always in the spiritual world,
 Without mystery, save those mysteries
 Which unfold themselves in the growing
 Inner experience of man and his vision of God,—
 To declare with unfaltering voice
 The Unity of God, the Brotherhood of Man,
 And Grace and Mercy, Bounty and Love,
 Poured out in unstinted measure for ever and ever.

C. 13.—And this great healing light shone
 Among a people steeped in ignorance,
 Brave and free, but without cohesion or union,
 Simple and rude, but with an easy familiarity with Nature
 Accustomed to Nature's hardships and her rugged resistance to man,
 But dreaming of the delights of gardens and fruitful fields,
 Cruel, yet with a rough sense of equality,
 And wielding a tongue, flexible, beautiful,
 And able to respond, with brevity and eloquence,
 To the sublimest thoughts which man could conceive.

C. 12.—Who were fit to be vehicles of this light?—
 Not men intoxicated with words and mysteries,
 Men whom politics had debauched or tyranny had subdued,
 Men whose refinement had ended in vices,
 Who saw Nature only through books or artificial conceits,
 Or in moods which bred softness, indolence, or luxury,
 Who spoke of love and justice, but practised
 Gross selfishness between class and class,
 Sex and sex, condition and condition ;
 And had perverted their language, once beautiful,
 Into jargons of empty elegance and unmeaning futility.

C. 14.—For the glory of Hellas, and her freedom and wisdom had departed ;
 Rome's great systems of law, organisation, and universal citizenship
 Had sunk into the mire of ecclesiastical formalism,
 And dogmatism, and exclusive arrogance ;
 The living fire of Persia's Prophet scarce smouldered
 In her votaries of luxury ;
 In India, countless castes and kingdoms
 Cancelled the unity of Buddha's teaching ;
 The wounds of China had not yet been healed by T'ang culture ;
 And Japan was still a disciple of China.

- C. 15.—Then, in the sacred city of pagan Arabia,
 Shone a light that spread in all directions.
 It was centrally placed for the bounds of the world
 Of men's habitations in Asia, Europe, and Africa,
 It made the Arabs the leading nation of culture and science,
 Of organised enterprise, law, and arts,
 With a zeal for the conquest of Nature and her mysteries.
- C. 16.—Behold ! There was born into the world of sense
 The unlettered Apostle, the comely child,
 Noble of birth, but nobler still
 In the grace and wisdom of human love
 And human understanding ; dowered with the key
 Which opened to him the enchanted palace
 Of nature ; marked out to receive—
 To receive and preach in burning words
 The spiritual truth and message of the Most High.
- C. 17.—Others before him had been born
 In darkness, beyond the reach
 Of history ; others again it pleased God
 To send as Messengers, preaching, working
 In the dim twilight of history,
 Wherein men fashion legends
 After their own hearts and dimly seek
 A light afar, remote from the lives
 Mean and sordid, such as they knew.
- C. 18.—But Muḥammad came in the fullest blaze
 Of history ; with no learning he put to shame
 The wisdom of the learned ; with pasture folk
 He lived and worked, and won their love ; in hills
 And valleys, caves and deserts, he wandered,
 But never lost his way to truth and righteousness ;
 From his pure and spotless heart the Angels washed
 Off the dust that flew around him ; through the ways
 Of crooked city folk, he walked upright and straight,
 And won from them the ungrudging name
 Of the Man of Faith¹ who never broke his word.
- C. 19.—To the Praiseworthy² indeed be praise :
 Born in the Sacred City³ he destroyed
 Its superstition ; loyal to his people to the core.

1. Al-Amīn.

2. Muḥammad,

3. Mecca,

He stood for all humanity ; orphan-born
 And poor, he envied not the rich,
 And made his special care all those
 Whom the world neglected or oppressed,—
 Orphans, women, slaves, and those in need
 Of food or comforts, mental solace, spiritual strength,
 Or virtues downtrodden in the haunts of men.

C. 20.—His mother ⁴ and his foster-mother ⁵
 Loved and wondered at the child ;
 His grandfather, 'Abdul Muṭṭalib,
 Of all his twice eight children and their offspring,
 Loved him best and all his sweet and gentle ways ;
 His uncle Abū Ṭālib, loth though he was
 To give up the cult of his fathers,
 Knew well the purity of Muḥammad's
 Mind and soul, and was his stoutest champion
 When the other chiefs of Mecca sought to kill
 The man who challenged in his person
 Their narrow Pagan selfish lives.

C. 21.—To his cousin 'Ali, the well-beloved,⁶
 Born when he was thirty, he appeared
 As the very pattern of a perfect man,
 As gentle as he was wise and true and strong,
 The one in whose defence and aid
 He spent his utmost strength and skill.
 Holding life cheap in support of a cause so high
 And placing without reserve his chivalry,
 His prowess, his wit and learning, and his sword
 At the service of this mighty Messenger of God.

C. 22.—Not till the age of forty ⁷ did he receive
 The Commission to stand forth and proclaim
 The Bounty of God, and His gift, to lowly Man,
 Of knowledge by Word and Pen ; but all through
 His years of preparation he did search
 The Truth ; he sought it in Nature's forms and laws,
 Her beauty and her stern unflinching ways ;
 He sought it in the inner world
 Of human lives, men's joys and sorrows,
 Their kindly virtues and their sins

4. Āmina. 5. Halīma. 6. Murtadhā. 7. The Arabian year before H. 10 was roughly
 luni-solar: See Appendix XI, p. 1077,

Of pride, injustice, cruel wrong,
 And greed of grain, scarce checked by the inner voice
 That spoke of duty, moral law, and higher still,
 The Will Supreme of God, to which the will
 Of man must tune itself to find its highest bliss.

C. 23.—But he grew steadfastly in virtue and purity;
 Untaught by men, he learnt from them, and learned
 To teach them; even as a boy of nine.
 When he went in a trade caravan with Abū Ṭalib
 To Syria,* his tender soul marked inwardly
 How God did speak in the wide expanse
 Of deserts, in the stern grandeur of rocks,
 In the refreshing flow of streams, in the smiling
 Bloom of gardens, in the art and skill with which
 Men and birds and all life sought for light.
 From the Life of Lives even as every plant
 Seeks through devious ways the light of the Sun.

C. 24.—Nor less was he grieved at Man's ingratitude
 When he rebelled and held as naught the Signs
 Of God, and turned His gifts to baser uses,
 Driving rarer souls to hermit life,
 Clouding the heavenly mirror of pure affections
 With selfish passions, mad unseemly wrangles,
 And hard unhallowed loathsome tortures of themselves.

C. 25.—He worked, and joyed in honest labour;
 He traded with integrity to himself and to others;
 He joined the throngs of cities and their busy life,
 But saw its good and evil as types
 Of an inner and more lasting life hereafter;
 People gladly sought his help as umpire
 And peacemaker because they knew his soul
 Was just and righteous: he loved the society
 Of old and young, but oft withdrew to solitude
 For Prayer and inward spiritual strength;
 He despised not wealth but used it for others;
 He was happy in poverty and used it as his badge

*It was on such visits that he met and conversed with Nestorian Christian monks like Baḥīrā who were quick to recognise his spiritual worth. Perhaps the meeting was in بصرى in the Jabal Druze district of Syria, some 80 miles south of Damascus. There was another Buḡrā in Edom, north of Petra in Transjordan. Buḡrā was famous for trade in costly red dyes, and is referred to as Bozrah in Isaiah, lxiii. 1. Neither of these towns is to be confounded with the modern Baḡrā.

And his pride⁹ when wealth was within his reach
But not within his grasp, as a man among men.

- C. 26.—At twenty-five he was united in the holy bonds
Of wedlock with Khdaija the Great, the noble lady
Who befriended him when he had no worldly resources,
Trusted him when his worth was little known,
Encouraged and understood him in his spiritual struggles,
Believed in him when with trembling steps,
He took up the Call and withstood obloquy,
Persecution, insults, threats, and tortures,
And was a life-long helpmate till she was gathered
To the saints in his fifty-first year.—
A perfect woman, the mother of those that believe.

- C. 27.—There is a cave in the side of Mount Hiraa
Some three miles north of the City of Mecca,
In a valley which turns left from the road to 'Arafāt.
To which Muḥammad used to retire for peaceful contemplation:
Often alone, but sometimes with Khadija,
Days and nights he spent there with his Lord.
Hard were the problems he revolved in his mind,—
Harder and more cross-grained than the red granite
Of the rock around him,—problems not his own.
But his people's, yea, and of human destiny,
Of the mercy of God, and the age-long conflict
Of evil and righteousness, sin and abounding Grace.

- C. 28.—Not till forty years of earthly life had passed
That the veil was lifted from the Preserved Tablet
And its contents began to be transferred to the tablet of his mind,
To be proclaimed to the world, and read and studied
for all time,—a fountain of mercy and wisdom,
A warning to the heedless, a guide to the erring,
An assurance to those in doubt, a solace to the suffering,
A hope to those in despair,—to complete the chain
Of Revelation through the mouths
Of divinely inspired Apostles.

- C. 29.—The Chosen One¹⁰ was in the Cave of Hiraa.
For two years and more he had prayed there and adored
His Creator and wondered at the mystery
Of man with his corruptible flesh, just growing

9. *Alfaqru fakhṛī*: "Poverty is my pride."

10. Muṣṭafā.

Out of a clot,^{10-A} and the soul in him
 Reaching out to knowledge sublime, new
 And ever new, taught by the bounty
 Of God, and leading to that which man himself
 Knoweth not. And now, behold ! a dazzling
 Vision of beauty and light overpowered his senses,
 And he heard the word "*Iqraa* !"

- C. 30.—"*Iqraa* !"—which being interpreted may mean
 "Read !" or "Proclaim !" or "Recite !"
 The unlettered Apostle was puzzled ;
 He could not read. The Angel seemed
 To press him to his breast in a close embrace,
 And the cry rang clear "*Iqraa* !"
 And so it happened three times ; until
 The first overpowering sensation yielded
 To a collected grasp of the words which made clear
 His Mission ; its Author, God the Creator,
 Its subject, Man, God's wondrous handiwork,
 Capable, by Grace, of rising to heights sublime ;
 And the instrument of that mission, the sanctified Pen.
 And the sanctified Book, the Gift of God,
 Which men might read, or write, or study, or treasure in their souls.

- C. 31.—The veil was lifted from the Chosen One's eyes,
 And his soul for a moment was filled with divine
 Ecstasy...When this passed,
 And he returned to the world of Time
 And Circumstance and this world of Sense,
 He felt like one whose eyes had seen
 A light of dazzling beauty, and felt dazed
 On his return to common slights.
 The darkness now seemed tenfold dark ;
 The solitude seemed tenfold empty ;
 The mount of *Hiraa*, henceforth known
 As the Mountain of Light,¹¹ the mere shell
 Of an intense memory. Was it a dream ?
 Terror seized his limbs and he straightway sought
 Her who shared his inmost life,
 And told her of his sense of exaltation,
 And the awful void when the curtain closed.

- C. 32.—She understood, rejoiced, and comforted him :
 Gave strength to his shaken senses ;

10-A. See xcvi, 2, and n. 6205.

11. *Jabal-un-Nūr*.

Wrapped up in warmth his shivering body,
 Unused as yet to bear the strain and stress.
 Of an experience rare to mortal men.
 She knew it was no dream or delusion.
 She went and consulted her cousin Waraqa,
 A devout worshipper of God in the Faith of Christ,
 Learned in spiritual lore. He listened
 And with her rejoiced that he, Muḥammad,
 Was God's Chosen One to renew the Faith.

C. 33.—She said : Blessed be thou, Chosen One !
 Do we not see thy inner life,—true and pure ?
 Do not all see thy outer life,—kind and gentle ?—
 Loyal to kin, hospitable to strangers ?
 No thought of harm or mischief ever stained thy mind
 Nor word ever passed thy lips that was not true
 Or stilled not the passions of narrower men.
 Ever ready in the service of God, thou art he
 Of whom I bear witness : there's no God but He,
 And thou art His chosen Apostle.

C. 34.—Khadīja believed, exalted in faith
 Above all women ; 'Alī, the well-beloved,
 Then a child of ten, but lion-hearted,
 Plighted his faith, and became from that moment
 The right hand of Islam ; Abū Bakr, the Sincere,¹⁸
 The True-hearted, the man of wealth and influence
 Who used both without stint for the Cause,
 The sober Counsellor, the inseparable friend,
 Never hesitated to declare his faith ;
 And Zaid, the freedman of Muḥammad,
 Counted his freedom as naught compared
 With the service of Muḥammad and Islam,
 These were the first fruits of the mission :
 A woman, a child, a man of affairs, and a freedman,
 All banded together in the equality of Islam.

C. 35.—The revelation had come, the mission
 And the inspiration. But what was it leading to ?
 It was a miracle, but not in the sense
 Of a reversing of Nature ; Muṣṭafā's vision
 Was linked with Eternity, but he was no soothsayer
 Foretelling passing events ; the mysteries

18. Ṣadiq or Ṣiddiq, the title of Abū Bakr.

Of knowledge were being opened out, but his message
 Was no mere esoteric doctrine, to be grasped
 By a few in contemplation, fleeing from action ;
 Nor was it the practice of single or social monasticism,
 Undisturbed by the whims or passions of life.
 He was asked to stand forth, to preach, to declare
 The One Universal God, the Gracious, the Merciful,
 And to lead men to the Right and forbid the Wrong.

- C. 36.—The wrong?—The selfish pride of birth,
 The massing of power and wealth in the hands
 Of a few, the slaughter of female infants,
 The orgies of gambling and drunkenness,
 The frauds of temples and idols and priests,
 The feuds and arrogance of tribes and races,
 The separation of Sacred and Profane,
 As if the unity of All Life and All Truth
 Did not flow from the unity of God Most High.
- C. 37.—He was loyal to his family, but could he support
 Their monopoly of power?—To his tribe,
 But were the Quraish the only creatures
 Of God?—To the temple of Mecca, but
 Could he wink at Lāt and 'Uzzā, and the other monsters,
 Whose worship killed the spiritual growth of Man?—
 To the earlier Revelations, but could he hold
 With the superstitions and falsehoods, the dogmas and creeds
 Which went against reason and nature, and the inner light
 Which was now fanned into flame by the Will of God?
- C. 38.—And so his very virtues and loyalties pointed
 To offence and conflict, mockery and misrepresentation,
 Hatred and persecution, threats, tortures, and exile
 For him and his, and martyrdoms, wars, revolutions,
 And the shaking of the foundations of history
 And the social order. But Islam meant
 The willing submission of his will to God,
 The active attainment of Peace through Conflict.
- C. 39.—And he gave that submission, not without effort,
 Even as Moses¹³ did before him,
 And Jesus¹⁴ in the agony of the garden of Gethsemane.

* * *

13. Qur-ān xx. 25-32.

14. Matt. xxvi.

C. 40.—For three and twenty years, in patience,
Conflict, hope, and final triumph,
Did this man of God receive
And teach the Message of the Most High.
It came, like the fruit of the soul's own yearning,
To teach profound spiritual truths,
Answer questions, appeal to men
In their doubts and fears, help and put heart
In them in moments of trial, and ordain
For them laws by which they could live
In society lives of purity, goodness and peace.

C. 41.—These messages came as inspiration
To Muḥammad as the need arose,
On different occasions and in different places :
He recited them, and they were recorded
By the Pen : they were imprinted on his heart
And mind, and on the memory
Of his loving disciples : as the body
Of sacred Scripture grew, it was arranged
For purposes of public prayer and reading .
This is the Book, or the Reading, or the Qur-ān.



INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA I (*Fātiḥa*)

- C. 42.—First comes that beautiful Sūra, ¹⁵
 The Opening Chapter ¹⁶ of Seven Verses, ¹⁷
 Rightly called the Essence of the Book.
 It teaches us the perfect Prayer.
 For if we can pray aright, it means
 That we have some knowledge of God
 And His attributes, of His relations
 To us and His creation, which includes
 Ourselves ; that we glimpse the source
 From which we come, and that final goal
 Which is our spiritual destiny
 Under God's true judgment : then
 We offer ourselves to God and seek His light.
- C. 43.—Prayer is the heart of Religion and Faith
 But how shall we pray ? What words shall convey
 The yearnings of our miserable ignorant hearts
 To the Knower of all ? Is it worthy of Him
 Or of our spiritual nature to ask
 For vanities, or even for such physical needs
 As our daily bread ? The Inspired One
 Taught us a Prayer that sums up our faith,
 Our hope, and our aspiration in things that matter,
 We think in devotion of God's name and His Nature ;
 We praise Him for His creation and His Cherishing care ;
 We call to mind the Realities, seen and unseen ;
 We offer Him worship and ask for His guidance ;
 And we know the straight from the crooked path
 By the light of His grace that illumines the righteous.

15. Each chapter or portion of the Qur-ān is called a Sūra, which means a Degree or Step, by which we mount up. Sometimes whole Sūras were revealed, and sometimes portions, which were arranged together according to subject-matter under the Apostle's directions. Some Sūras are long, and some are short, but a logical thread runs through them all. Each verse of the Sūra is called an *Āyat* (plural, *Āyāt*), which means also a sign. A verse of revelation is a Sign of God's wisdom and goodness just as much as God's beautiful handiwork in the material creation or His dealings in history are signs to us, if we would understand. Some *Āyats* are long, and some are short. The *Āyat* is the true unit of the Qur-ān.

16. *Fātiḥa*=Opening Chapter.

17. These seven verses form a complete unit by themselves, and are recited in every prayer and on many other occasions. Cf vx. 87.

Sūra I.

Fātiḥa, or the Opening Chapter.¹⁸1. In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.¹⁹2. Praise be to God,
The Cherisher and Sustainer²⁰ of
the Worlds ;

3. Most Gracious, Most Merciful ;

4. Master of the Day of Judgment.

5. Alḥee do we worship,²¹
And Thine aid we seek.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

18. By universal consent it is rightly placed at the beginning of the Qur-ān, as summing up, in marvellously terse and comprehensive words, man's relation to God in contemplation and prayer. In our spiritual contemplation the first words should be those of praise. If the praise is from our inmost being, it brings us into union with God's will. Then our eyes see all good, peace, and harmony. Evil, rebellion, and conflict are purged out. They do not exist for us, for our eyes are lifted up above them in praise. Then we see God's attributes better (verses 2-4). This leads us to the attitude of worship and acknowledgment (verse 5). And finally comes prayer for guidance, and a contemplation of what guidance means (verses 6-7).

God needs no praise, for He is above all praise : He needs no petition, for He knows our needs better than we do ourselves ; and His bounties are open without asking, to the righteous and the sinner alike. The prayer is for our own spiritual education, consolation, and confirmation.

That is why the words in this Sūra are given to us in the form in which we should utter them. When we reach enlightenment, they flow spontaneously from us.

19. The Arabic words "*Raḥmān*" and "*Raḥīm*," translated "Most Gracious" and "Most Merciful" are both intensive forms referring to different aspects of God's attribute of Mercy. The Arabic intensive is more suited to express God's attributes than the superlative degree in English. The latter implies a comparison with other beings, or with other times or places, while there is no being like unto God, and He is independent of Time and Place. Mercy may imply pity, long-suffering, patience, and forgiveness, all of which the sinner need and God Most Merciful bestows in abundant measure. But there is Mercy that goes before even the need arises, the Grace which is ever watchful, and flows from God Most Gracious to all His creatures, protecting them, preserving them, guiding them, and leading them to clearer light and higher life. For this reason the attribute *Raḥmān* (Most Gracious) is not applied to any but God but the attribute *Raḥīm* (Merciful), is a general term, and may also be applied to men. To make us contemplate these boundless gifts of God, the formula : "In the name of God Most Gracious, Most Merciful" : is placed before every Sūra of the Qur-ān (except the ninth), and repeated at the beginning of every act by the Muslim who dedicates his life to God, and whose hope is in His Mercy.

Opinion is divided whether the *Bismillāh* should be numbered as a separate verse or not. It unanimously agreed that it is part of the Qur-ān. Therefore it is better to give it an independent number in the first Sūra. For subsequent Sūras it is treated as an introduction or head-line, and therefore not numbered.

20. The Arabic word *Rabb*, usually translated Lord, has also the meaning of cherishing, sustaining, bringing to maturity. God cares for all the worlds He has created.

There are many worlds,—astronomical and physical worlds, worlds of thought, spiritual worlds, and so on. In every one of them, God's is all in all. We express only one aspect of it when we say : "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." The mystical division between (1) *Nāṣūt*, the human world knowable by the senses, (2) *Malakūt*, the invisible world of angels, and (3) *Lāḥūt*, the divine world of Reality, requires a whole volume to explain it.

21. On realizing in our souls God's love and care, His grace and mercy, and His power and justice (as Ruler of the Day of Judgment), the immediate result is that we bend in the act of worship, and see both our shortcomings and His all-sufficient power. The emphatic form means that not only do we reach the position of worshipping God and asking for His help, but we worship Him, alone and ask for His aid only. For there is none other than He worthy of our devotion and able to help us. The plural "we" indicates that we associate ourselves with all who seek God, thus strengthening ourselves and strengthening them in fellowship of faith.

6. Show²² us the straight way

7. The way of those on whom
Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace,
Those whose (portion)
Is not wrath,²³
And who go not astray.²⁴

٦- إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝

٧- صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ غَيْرِ
الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝



22. If we translate by the English word "guide," we shall have to say: "Guide us to and in the straight Way." For we may be wandering aimlessly, and the first step is to find the Way; and the second need is to keep in the Way: our own wisdom may fail in either case. The straight Way is often the narrow Way or the steep Way, which many people shun (xc. 11). By the world's perversity the straight Way is sometimes stigmatized and the crooked Way praised. How are we to judge? We must ask for God's guidance. With a little spiritual insight we shall see which are the people who walk in the light of God's grace, and which are those that walk in the darkness of Wrath. This also would help our judgment.

23. Note that the words relating to Grace are connected actively with God; those relating to Wrath are impersonal. In the one case God's Mercy encompasses us beyond our deserts. In the other case our own actions are responsible for the Wrath,—the negative of Grace, Peace, or Harmony.

24. Are there two categories?—those who are in the darkness of Wrath and those who stray? The first are those who deliberately break God's law; the second those who stray out of carelessness or negligence. Both are responsible for their own acts or omissions. In opposition to both are the people who are in the light of God's Grace; for His Grace not only protects them from active wrong (if they will only submit their will to Him) but also from straying into paths of temptation or carelessness. The negative *gair* should be construed as applying not to the way, but as describing men protected from two dangers by God's Grace.

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA II (*Baqara*)

As the Opening Sūra sums up in seven beautiful verses the essence of the Qur-ān, so this Sūra sums up in 286 verses the whole teaching of the Qur-ān. It is a closely reasoned argument.

Summary.—It begins (verses 1-29) with mystic doctrine as to the three kinds of men and how they receive God's message.

This leads to the story of the creation of man, the high destiny intended for him, his fall, and the hope held out to him (ii. 30-39).

Israel's story is then told according to their own records and traditions—what privileges they received and how they abused them (ii. 40-86), thus illustrating again as by a parable the general story of man.

In particular, reference is made to Moses and Jesus and their struggles with an unruly people: how the people of the Book played false with their own lights and in their pride rejected Muḥammad, who came in the true line of apostolic succession (ii. 87-121).

They falsely laid claim to the virtues of Father Abraham: he was indeed a righteous Imām, but he was the progenitor of Ismā'il's line (Arabs) as well as of Israel's line, and he with Ismā'il built the Ka'ba (Temple of Mecca) and purified it, thus establishing a common religion, of which Islam is the universal exponent (ii. 122-141).

The Ka'ba was now to be the centre of universal worship and the symbol of Islamic unity (ii. 142-167).

The Islamic *Ummat* (brotherhood) having thus been established with its definite centre and symbol, ordinances are laid down for the social life of the community, with the proviso (ii. 177) that righteousness does not consist in formalities, but in faith, kindness, prayer, charity, probity, and patience under suffering. The ordinances relate to food and drink, bequests, fasts, *jihād*, wine and gambling, treatment of orphans and women, etc. (ii. 168-242).

Lest the subject of *jihād* should be misunderstood, it is taken up again in the story of Saul, Goliath and David, in contrast to the story of Jesus (ii. 243-253).

And so the lesson is enforced that true virtue lies in practical deeds of manliness, kindness, and good faith (ii. 254-283), and God's nature is called to mind in the sublime *Āyat-ul-Kursī*, the Verse of the Throne (ii. 255).

The Sūra ends with an exhortation to Faith, Obedience, a sense of Personal Responsibility, and Prayer (ii. 284-286).

This is the longest Sūra of the Qur-ān and in it occurs the longest verse (ii. 282). The name of the Sūra is from the Parable of the Heifer in ii. 67-71, which illustrates the insufficiency of carping obedience. When faith is lost, people put off obedience with various excuses: even when at last they obey in the letter, they fail in the spirit, which means that they get fossilized, and their self-sufficiency prevents them from seeing that spiritually they are not alive but dead. For life is movement, activity, striving, fighting against baser things. And this is the burden of the Sūra.

This is in the main an early Medina Sūra.

C. 44.—The Message of God is a guide that is sure
(ii. 1-29.) To those who seek His light. But those
Who reject faith are blind: their hearts
Are sealed. Woe to the hypocrites,
Self-deceived and deceiving others,
With mockery on their lips, and mischief
In their hearts, and fear; the clouds
That bring fertilizing rain to others,
To them bring but deafening thunder-peals
And lightning flashes blinding to their eyes.

Sūra II.

Baqara, or the Heifer.

In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

1. **A. L. M.** ²⁵

2. This is the Book ;
In it is guidance, sure, without doubt,
To those who fear²⁶ God ;

3. Who believe in the Unseen,
Are steadfast in prayer,
And spend out of what We
Have provided for them ; ²⁷

4. And who believe in the Revelation
Sent to thee,



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

١- اَلَمْ ۝١

٢- ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۤ فِيْهِ ۚ

هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝

٣- الَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ

الصَّلٰوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۝

٤- وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِمَا اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ وَ

25. These are abbreviated letters, the *Muqatta'at*, on which a general discussion will be found in Appendix I (to be printed at the end of this Sūra).

The particular letters A. L. M. are found prefixed to this Sūra, and Sūras iii, xxix, xxx, xxxi, and xxxii (six in all). In ii and iii the argument is about the rise and fall of nations, their past and their future in history, with ordinances for the new universal People of Islam. In xxix, a similar argument about nations leads off to the mystery of Life and Death, Failure and Triumph, Past and Future things, in the history of individual souls. The burden of xxx. is that God is the source of all things and all things return to Him. In xxxi. and xxxii. the same lesson is enforced: God is the Creator and He will be the judge on the Last Day. There is therefore a common thread, the mystery of Life and Death, Beginning and End.

Much has been written about the meaning of these letters, but most of it is pure conjecture. Some commentators are content to recognize them as some mystic symbols, of which it is unprofitable to discuss the meaning by mere verbal logic. In mysticism we accept symbols as such for the time being; their esoteric meaning comes from the inner light when we are ready for it.

Among the conjectures there are two plausible theories. One is that each initial represents an attribute of God. Among the attributes it is not difficult to select three which will fit in with these letters. Another theory favoured by Baidhawī, is that these letters are the initial, the final and the middle (or again the initial) letter of three names: Allah, Jibril, and Muḥammad,—the source of revelation, the heavenly Messenger who brought it, and the human Messenger through whom it was promulgated in human speech. This might be appropriate to the first Sūra (which *Baqara* really is if we treat *Fātiḥa* as a preface): but if it was prefixed to others, why to these six only?

If we look to the nature of the sounds which the letters represent. A is a breathing and comes from the throat. L is a lingual-palatal-dental sound from the middle of the mouth, and M is a labial or lip-sound. Can we not take them as symbolical of the Beginning, Middle and End? If so, are they not appropriate to the Sūras which treat specifically of Life, Growth, and Death—the Beginning and the End? In the New Testament Greek scripture, the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet, Alpha and Omega, are symbolical of the Beginning and the End, and give one of the titles of God: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (Rev. i. 8). The symbolism of the three things is better with three letters.

26. *Taqwā*, and the verbs and nouns connected with the root, signify: (1) the fear of God, which, according to the writer of Proverbs (i. 7) in the Old Testament, is the beginning of Wisdom: (2) restraint, or guarding one's tongue, hand, and heart from evil; hence righteousness, piety, good conduct. All these ideas are implied: in the translation, only one or other of these ideas can be indicated, according to the context. See also xlvii. 17; and lxxiv. 56, n. 5808.

27. All bounties proceed from God. They may be physical gifts, e.g., food, clothing, houses, gardens, wealth, etc., or intangible gifts, e.g., influence, power, birth and the opportunities flowing from it, health, talents, etc., or spiritual gifts, e.g., insight into good and evil, understanding of men, the capacity for love, etc. We are to use all in humility and moderation. But we are also to give out of every one of them something that contributes to the well-being of others. We are to be neither ascetics nor luxurious sybarites, neither selfish misers nor thoughtless prodigals.

And sent before thy time,
And (in their hearts)
Have the assurance of the
Hereinafter.²⁸

5. They are on (true) guidance,
From their Lord, and it is
These who will prosper.²⁹

6. As to those who reject Faith,³⁰
It is the same to them
Whether thou warn them
Or do not warn them ;
They will not believe.

7. God hath set a seal³¹
On their hearts and on their hearing,
And on their eyes is a veil ;
Great is the penalty they (incur).³²

SECTION 2.

8. Of the people there are some
who say : ³³
" We believe in God and the Last
Day ; "
But they do not (really) believe.

9. Fain would they deceive
God and those who believe,
But they only deceive themselves,
And realize (it) not !

10. In their hearts is a disease ;

مَا أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ
يُوقِنُونَ ۝

هـ- أُولَئِكَ عَلَى هُدًى مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝

٦- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ
أَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنْذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

٧- خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَ
عَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

٨- وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَ
بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

٩- يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا
يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ۝

١٠- فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا

28. Righteousness comes from a secure faith, from sincere devotion to God, and from unselfish service to Man.

29. Prosperity must be taken as referring to all the kinds of bounty which we discussed in the note to ii. 3 above. The right use of one kind leads to an increase in that and other kinds, and that is prosperity.

30. *Kafara*, *kufr*, *kāfir*, and derivative forms of the word, imply a deliberate rejection of Faith as opposed to a mistaken idea of God or faith, which is not inconsistent with an earnest desire to see the truth. Where there is such desire, the grace and mercy of God gives guidance. But that guidance is not efficacious when it is deliberately rejected, and the possibility of rejection follows from the grant of free will. The consequence of the rejection is that the spiritual faculties become dead or impervious to better influences. See also n. 93 to ii. 88.

31. All actions are referred to God. Therefore when we get the penalty of our deliberate sin, and our senses become impervious to good, to penalty is referred to the justice of God.

32. The penalty here is the opposite of the prosperity referred to in ii. 5. As we go down the path of sin, our penalty gathers momentum, just as goodness brings its own capacity for greater goodness.

33. We now come to a third class of people, the hypocrites. They are untrue to themselves, and therefore their hearts are diseased (ii. 10). The disease tends to spread, like an evil. They are curable, but if they harden their hearts, they soon pass into the category of those who deliberately reject light.

And God has increased their
disease : ³⁴
And grievous is the penalty they
(incur).
Because they are false
(to themselves).

وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۖ بِمَا كَانُوا
يَكْذِبُونَ ○

11. When it is said to them :
" Make not mischief on the earth,"
They say : " Why, we only
Want to make peace ! "

۝ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ○

12. Of a surety, they are the ones
Who make mischief,
But they realize (it) not. ³⁵

۝ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا
يَشْعُرُونَ ○

13. When it is said to them :
" Believe as the others believe : "
They say : " Shall we believe
As the fools believe ? " —
Nay, of a surety they are the fools,
But they do not know. ³⁶

۝ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ امْكُفُوا كَمَا امَّنَ النَّاسُ
قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ مِنْ كَمَا امَّنَ الشُّفَهَاءُ ۖ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ
هُمُ الشُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

14. When they meet those who
believe, ³⁷
They say : " We believe ; "
But when they are alone
With their evil ones,
They say : " We are really with you :
We (were) only jesting."

۝ وَإِذَا قَالُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا
خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شُيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا
نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزَؤُونَ ○

15. God will throw back
Their mockery on them,
And give them rope in their
trespasses ;
So they will wander like blind ones
(To and fro).

۝ اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ
يَعْتَهُونَ ○

16. These are they who have bartered
Guidance for error :

۝ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ

34. The insincere man who thinks he can get the best of both worlds by compromising with good and evil only increases the disease of his heart, because he is not true to himself. Even the good which comes to him he can pervert to evil. So the rain which fills out the ear of corn or lends fragrance to the rose also lends strength to the thorn or adds strength to the poison of the deadly night-shade.

35. Much mischief is caused (sometimes unwittingly) by people who think that they have a mission of peace, when they have not even a true perception of right and wrong. By their blind arrogance they depress the good and encourage the evil.

36. This is another phase of the hypocrite and the cynic. " Faith," he says, is good enough to fools." But his cynicism may be the greatest folly in the eyes of God.

37. A deeper phase of insincerity is actual duplicity. But it never pays in the end. If we compare such a man to a trader, he loses in the bargain.

But their traffic is profitless,
And they have lost true direction.

17. Their similitude is that of a
man³⁸

Who kindled a fire ;
When it lighted all around him,
God took away their light
And left them in utter darkness.
So they could not see.

18. Deaf, dumb, and blind,
They will not return (to the path).

19. Or (another similitude) ³⁹
Is that of rain-laden cloud
From the sky : in it are zones
Of darkness, and thunder and
lightning :
They press their fingers in their ears
To keep out the stunning
thunder-clap,
The while they are in terror of
death.
But God is ever round
The rejecters of Faith !

20. The lightning all but snatches away
Their sight ; every time the light
(Helps) them, they walk therein,
And when the darkness grows on
them,
They stand still.
And if God willed, He could take
away
Their faculty of hearing and seeing ;
For God hath power over all things.

فَمَا رِبْحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ۝

١٧- مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا ۖ فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمٍ لَا يَبْصُرُونَ ۝

١٨- صُمُّكُمْ عُمَىٰ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ۝

١٩- أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ ۚ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِم مِّنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ۝

٢٠- يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَّشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

38. The man wanted light ; he only kindled a fire. It produced a blaze, and won the applause of all around. But it did not last long. When the flame went out as was inevitable, the darkness was worse than before. And they all lost their way. So hypocrisy, deception, arrogant compromise with evil, cynicism, or duplicity may win temporary applause. But the true light of faith and sincerity is wanting, therefore it must mislead and ruin all concerned. In the consternation they cannot speak or hear each other, and of course they cannot see ; so they end like the deliberate rejecters of Faith (ii. 7), wildly groping about, dumb, deaf and blind.

39. A wonderfully graphic and powerful simile applying to those who reject Faith. In their self-sufficiency they are undisturbed normally. But what happens when a great storm breaks over them ? They cover their ears against thunder-claps, and the lightning nearly blinds them. They are in mortal fear, but God encompasses them around—even them, for He at all times encompasses all. He gives them rope. In the intervals of deafening noise and blinding flashes, there are moments of steady light, and these creatures take advantage of them, but again they are plunged into darkness. Perhaps they curse ; perhaps they think that the few moments of effective light are due to their own intelligence ! How much wiser would they be if they humbled themselves and sought the light of God !

SECTION 3.

21. ﴿٢١﴾ ye people !

Adore your Guardian-Lord,
Who created you
And those who came before you,
That ye may have the chance
To learn righteousness ; ⁴⁰

٢١- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي
خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَتَّقُونَ ۝

22. Who has made the earth your
couch,
And the heavens your canopy ;
And sent down rain from the
heavens ;
And brought forth therewith
Fruits for your sustenance ;
Then set not up rivals ⁴¹ unto God
When ye know (the truth).

٢٢- الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ
بِنَاءً ۖ وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ
بِهِ مِنَ الشَّجَرِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ ۖ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا
لِلَّهِ أُنْدَادًا ۖ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

23. And if ye are in doubt
As to what We have revealed
From time to time to Our servant,
Then produce a Sūra
Like thereunto ;
And call your witnesses or helpers
(If there are any) besides God,
If your (doubts) are true. ⁴²

٢٣- وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ
عَبْدِنَا فَاتْلُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّنْ مِّثْلِهِ ۖ وَادْعُوا
شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
صَادِقِينَ ۝

24. But if ye cannot—
And of a surety ye cannot—
Then fear the Fire
Whose fuel is Men and Stones,—
Which is prepared for those

٢٤- فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ
الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ ۖ أُعِدَّتْ
لِلْكَافِرِينَ ۝

40. For Taqwā see ii. 2 n. 26. I connect this dependent clause with "adore, etc." above, though it could be connected with "created." According to my construction the argument will be as follows. Adoration is the act of the highest and humblest reverence and worship. When you get into that relationship with God, Who is your Creator and Guardian, your faith produces work of righteousness. It is a chance given you : will you exercise your free will and take it ? If you do, your whole nature will be transformed.

41. Further proofs of God's goodness to you are given in this verse. Your whole life, physical and spiritual, depends upon Him. The spiritual is figured by the Canopy of Heaven. The truth has been brought plainly before you. Will you still resist it and go after false gods, the creation of your own fancy ? The false gods may be idols, superstitions, Self, or even great or glorious things like Poetry, Art, or Science, when set up as rivals to God. They may be pride of race, pride of birth, pride of wealth or position, pride of power, pride of learning, or even spiritual pride.

42. How do we know that there is revelation, and that it is from God ? Here is a concrete test. The Teacher of God's Truth has placed before you many Sūras. Can you produce one like it ? If there is any one besides God, who can inspire spiritual truth in such noble language, produce your evidence. Or is it that your doubts are merely argumentative, refractory, against your own inner light, or conscience ? All true revelation is itself a miracle, and stands on its own merits.

Who reject Faith.⁴³

25. But give glad tidings
To those who believe
And work righteousness,
That their portion is Gardens,
Beneath which rivers flow.
Every time they are fed
With fruits therefrom,
They say : " Why, this is
What we were fed with before,"
For they are given things in
similitude ;
And they have therein
Companions pure (and holy) ; ⁴⁴
And they abide therein (for ever).

٢٥- وَيُبَشِّرُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
كُلَّمَا رَزَقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رَزَقُوا قَالُوا
هَذَا الَّذِي رَزَقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأُتُوا بِهِ
مُتَشَابِهًا
وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ
فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

26. God disdains not to use
The similitude of things,
Lowest ⁴⁵ as well as highest.

٢٦- إِنْ أَلَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيَ أَنْ يُضْرَبَ

43. If by your own efforts you cannot match the spiritual light, and yet contumaciously reject spiritual Faith, then there will be a fire in your souls, the Punishment that burns up all your cherished idols. Perhaps you will at least fear this penalty, which your self-lowing souls can understand. This fire consumes both the worshippers of the False and the Idols which they falsely worship. Can this bring them to their senses? Its power is not only over the feeling, palpitating heart of man (heart in a spiritual sense, as it persists long after the physical heart), but he cannot escape from it even if he imagines himself reduced to inertness like stocks or stones ; for it is all-devouring.

44. This is the antithesis to the last verse. If fire is the symbol of Punishment, the Garden is the symbol of felicity. And what can be more delightful than a Garden where you observe from a picturesque height a beautiful landscape round you?—rivers flowing with crystal water, and fruit trees of which the choicest fruit is before you. The fruit of goodness is goodness, similar, but choicer in every degree of ascent. You think it is the same, but it is because of your past experiences and associations of memory. Then there is companionship. If sex is suggested, its physical associations are at once negated by the addition of the word *Mutahharatun*, "pure and holy." The Arabic epithet is in the intensive form, and must be translated by two adjectives denoting purity in the highest degree. The Companionship is that of souls and applies to both sexes in the physical world of men and women. And this felicity is not a mere passing phase but will abide beyond the realms of Time.

45. The word for "the lowest" in the original Arabic means a gnat, a byword in the Arabic language for the weakest of creatures. In xxix. 41, which was revealed before this Sūra, the similitude of the Spider was used, and similarly in xxii. 73, there is the similitude of the Fly. For similitudes taken from magnificent forces of nature, expressed in exalted language, see ii. 19 above. To God all His creation has some special meaning appropriate to itself, and some of what we consider the lowest creatures have wonderful aptitudes, e.g., the spider or the fly. Parables like these may be an occasion of stumbling to those "who forsake the path"; in other words those who deliberately shut their eyes to God's Signs, and their Penalty is attributed to God, the Cause of all causes. But lest there should be misunderstanding, it is immediately added that the stumbling and offence only occur as the result of the sinner's own choice of the wrong course. Verses 26 and 27 form one sentence and should be read together. "Forsaking the path" is defined in ii. 27; viz., breaking solemn covenants which the sinner's own soul had ratified, causing division among mankind, who were meant to be one brotherhood, and doing as much mischief as possible in the life on this earth, for the life beyond will be on another plane, where no rope will be given to evil.

The mention of the Covenant (ii. 27) has a particular and a general signification. The particular one has reference to the Jewish tradition that a Covenant was entered into with "Father Abraham" that in return for God's favours the seed of Abraham would serve God faithfully. But as a matter of fact a great part of Abraham's progeny were in constant spiritual rebellion against God, as is testified by their own Prophets and Preachers and by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā. The general signification is that a similar Covenant is metaphorically entered into by every creature of God; for God's loving care, we at least owe Him the fullest gratitude and willing obedience. The Sinner, before he darkens his own conscience, knows this, and yet he not only "forsakes the path" but resists the Grace of God which comes to save him. That is why his case becomes hopeless. But the loss is his own. He cannot spoil God's design. The good man is glad to retrace his steps from any lapses of which he may have been guilty, and in his case God's Message reclaims him with complete understanding.

Those who believe know
That it is truth from their Lord ;
But those who reject Faith say :
" What means God by this
similitude ? "
By it He causes many to stray,
And many He leads into the right
path ;
But He causes not to stray,
Except those who forsake
(the path),—

27. Those who break God's Covenant
After it is ratified,
And who sunder what God
Has ordered to be joined,
And do mischief on earth ;
These cause loss (only) to
themselves.

28. How can ye reject ⁴⁶
The faith in God?—
Seeing that ye were without life,
And He gave you life ;
Then will He cause you to die,
And will again bring you to life ;
And again to Him will ye return.

29. It is He Who hath created for you
All things that are on earth ;
Moreover His design comprehended
the heavens,
For He gave order and perfection
To the seven firmaments ;
And of all things
He hath perfect knowledge.

مَا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَمَّا
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ
بِهَذَا امْتِلَاءً يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي
بِهِ كَثِيرًا
وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ ٥

٢٤-الَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ
مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ
يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ
هُمْ الْخَاسِرُونَ ٥

٢٨-كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا
فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ
إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ٥

٢٩-هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ
سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ
وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ٥

C. 45.—Yet man ! What wonderful destiny
(ii. 30-39.) Is Thine ! Created to be
God's vicegerent on earth !
A little higher than angels !

46. In the preceding verses God has used various arguments. He has recalled His goodness (ii. 21-22) : resolved doubts (ii. 23) : plainly set forth the penalty of wrong-doing (ii. 24) : given glad tidings (ii. 25) : shown how misunderstandings arise from a deliberate rejection of the light and breach of the Covenant (ii. 26-27). Now (ii. 28-29), He pleads with His creatures and appeals to their own subjective feelings. He brought you into being. The mysteries of life and death are in His hands. When you die on this earth, that is not the end. You were of Him, and you must return to Him. Look around you and realize your own dignity : it is from Him. The immeasurable depths of space above and around you may stagger you. They are part of His plan. What you have imagined as the seven firmaments (and any other scheme you may construct) bears witness to His design of order and perfection, for His knowledge (unlike yours) is all-comprehending. And yet will you deliberately reject or obscure or deaden the faculty of Faith which has been put into you ?

Yet beguiled by evil! Set for a season
On this earth on probation
To purge thy stain, with the promise
Of guidance and hope from on high,
From the Oft-Returning, Merciful!
Wilt thou choose right and regain
Thy spiritual home with God?

SECTION 4.

30. Behold, thy Lord said to the
angels: "I will create
A vicegerent on earth." They said:
"Wilt Thou place therein one who
will make
Mischief therein and shed blood?—
Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises
And glorify Thy holy (name)?"
He said: "I know what ye know
not." 47

٣٠- وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰئِكَةِ اِنِّىْ جَاعِلٌ
فِى الْاَرْضِ خَلِیْفَةً ۚ قَالُوْۤا اَتَجْعَلُ فِیْهَا
مَنْ یُّفْسِدُ فِیْهَا وَیَسْفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ ۚ وَ
نَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ
اِنِّىْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝

31. And He taught Adam the nature 48
Of all things; then He placed them
Before the angels, and said: "Tell
Me
The nature of these if ye are right."

٣١- وَعَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ
عَلٰى الْمَلٰئِكَةِ فَقَالَ اَنْبِئُوْنِیْ بِاَسْمَآءِ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِیْنَ ۝

32. They said: "Glory to Thee: of
knowledge

٣٢- قَالُوْۤا سُبْحٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَاۤ اِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا

47. It would seem that the angels, though holy and pure, and endued with power from God, yet represented only one side of Creation. We may imagine them without passion or emotion, of which the highest flower is love. If man was to be endued with emotions, those emotions could lead him to the highest and drag him to the lowest. The power of will or choosing would have to go with them, in order that man might steer his own bark. This power of will (when used aright) gave him to some extent a mastery over his own fortunes and over nature, thus bringing him nearer to the God-like nature, which has supreme mastery and will. We may suppose the angels had no independent wills of their own: their perfection in other ways reflected God's perfection but could not raise them to the dignity of vicegerency. The perfect vicegerent is he who has the power of initiative himself, but whose independent action always reflects perfectly the will of his Principal. The distinction is expressed by Shakespeare (Sonnet 94) in those fine lines: "They are the lords and owners of their faces. Others but stewards of their excellence." The angels in their one-sidedness saw only the mischief consequent on the misuse of the emotional nature by man; perhaps they also, being without emotions, did not understand the whole of God's nature, which gives and asks for love. In humility and true devotion to God, they remonstrate: we must not imagine the least tinge of jealousy, as they are without emotion. This mystery of love being above them, they are told that they do not know, and they acknowledge (in ii. 23 below) not their fault (for there is no question of fault) but their imperfection of knowledge. At the same time, the matter is brought home to them when the actual capacities of man are shown to them (ii. 31, 33).

48. The literal words in Arabic throughout this passage are: "The names of things: " which commentators take to mean the inner nature and qualities of things, and things here would include feelings. The whole passage is charged with mystic meaning. The particular qualities or feelings which were outside the nature of angels were put by God into the nature of man. Man was thus able to love and understand love, and thus plan and initiate, as becomes the office of vicegerent. The angels acknowledged this. These things they could only know from the outside, but they had faith, or belief in the Unseen. And they knew that God saw all—what others see, what others do not see, what others may even wish to conceal. Man has many qualities which are latent or which he may wish to suppress or conceal, to his own detriment.

We have none, save what Thou
Hast taught us : in truth it is Thou
Who art perfect in knowledge and
wisdom."

إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

33. He said : " O Adam ! tell them
Their natures." When he had told
them,
God said : " Did I not tell you
That I know the secrets of heavens
And earth, and I know what ye
reveal
And what ye conceal ? "

٣٣- قَالَ يَادَمُ أَتَيْتُكُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلْتَأْتُوا
أَنْبَاءَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي
أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ الشَّمْوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا
بُذُّونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ۝

34. And behold, We said to the angels :
" Bow down to Adam : " and they
bowed down :
Not so Iblis : ⁴⁹ he refused and was
haughty :
He was of those who reject Faith.

٣٤- وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ
فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ
مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

35. ~~We~~ We said : " O Adam ! dwell
thou
And thy wife in the Garden ; ⁵⁰
And eat of the bountiful things
therein
As (where and when) ye will ; but
approach not this tree,
Or ye run into harm and
transgression." ⁵¹

٣٥- وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ
الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا
وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ
الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

36. Then did Satan ⁵² make them slip
From the (Garden), and get them
out

٣٦- فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا

49. The Arabic may also be translated : " They bowed down, except Iblis." In that case Iblis (Satan) would be one of the angels. But the theory of fallen angels is not usually accepted in Muslim theology. In xviii. 50, Iblis is spoken of as a Jinn. We shall discuss later the meaning of this word.

50. Was the Garden of Eden a place on this earth ? Obviously not. For, in verse 36 below, it was after the Fall that the sentence was pronounced : " On earth will be your dwelling-place." Before the Fall, we must suppose Man to be on another plane altogether—of felicity, innocence, trust, a spiritual existence, with the negation of enmity, want of faith, and all evil. Perhaps Time and Space also did not exist, and the Garden is allegorical as well as the tree. The forbidden tree was not the tree of knowledge, for man was given in that perfect state fuller knowledge than he has now (ii. 31): it was the tree of Evil, which he was forbidden not only to eat of, but even to approach.

51. "Zulm" in Arabic implies harm, wrong, injustice, or transgression, and may have reference to oneself : when the wrong is done to others it implies tyranny and oppression ; the idea of wrong naturally connects itself with darkness, which is another shade of meaning carried with the root word.

52. "Iblis" in ii. 34 is apparently the Power of Evil, with the root idea of desperateness or rebellion. "Satan" in this verse is the Power of Evil, with the root idea of perversity or enmity. Note the appropriateness of the term on each occasion. Also, "slipping" from the Garden denotes the idea of Evil gradually tempting man from a higher to a lower state.

Of the state (of felicity) in which
They had been. We said :
"Get ye down, all (ye people⁵³),
With enmity between yourselves.
On earth will be your dwelling-
place
And your means of livelihood⁵⁴—
For a time."

37. Then learnt Adam from his Lord
Words of inspiration,⁵⁵ and his
Lord
Turned towards him ; for He
Is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful.

38. We said : "Get ye down all from
here ;
And if, as is sure, there comes to you
Guidance from Me,⁵⁶ whosoever
Follows My guidance, on them
Shall be no fear, nor shall they
grieve.

39. "But those who reject Faith
And belie Our Signs,
They shall be Companions of the
Fire ;
They shall abide therein."⁵⁷

وَمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ
وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ
وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى
حِينٍ ○

٣٧- فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ
عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ○

٣٨- قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا
فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ
هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٣٩- وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ
ۚ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

C. 46.—Amongst men what nation had higher chances
(ii. 40-86.) In the realm of the Spirit than the Children of Israel ?
But again and again did they fail in the Spirit.

53. God's decree is the result of man's action. Note the transition in Arabic from the singular number in ii. 33, to the dual in ii. 35, and the plural here, which I have indicated in English by "All ye people." Evidently Adam is the type of all mankind, and the sexes go together in all spiritual matters. Moreover, the expulsion applied to Adam, Eve, and Satan, and the Arabic plural is appropriate for any number greater than two.

54. Man's sojourn in this lower state, where he is partly an animal of this earth, is for a time. But he must fulfil his lower duties also, for they too are a part of his spiritual training.

55. As "names" in verse 31 above is used for the "nature of things," so "words" here means "inspiration," "spiritual knowledge." The Arabic word used for "learn" here implies some effort on his part, to which God's Grace responded.

The Arabic word for "Repentance" (*tauba*) means "turning," and the intensive word (*tauwāb*) for God's forgiveness ("Oft-Returning" or "Ever-Returning") is from the same root. For repentance, three things are necessary: the sinner must acknowledge his wrong ; he must give it up ; and he must resolve to eschew it for the future. Man's nature is weak, and he may have to return again and again for mercy. So long as he does it sincerely, God is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful. For His grace helps out the sinner's shortcomings.

56. Note the transition from the plural "We" at the beginning of the verse to the singular "Me" later in the same verse. God speaks of Himself usually in the first person plural "We": it is the plural of respect and honour and is used in human language in Royal Proclamations and decrees. But where a special personal relationship is expressed the singular, "I" or "Me" is used. Cf. xxvi. 52 etc.

In spite of Man's fall, and in consequence of it, assurance of guidance is given. In case man follows the guidance, he is free from any fear for the present or the future, and any grief or sorrow for the past. The soul thus freed grows nearer to God.

57. But if the soul, in spite of the Oft-Returning Mercy of God, rejects the higher light and goes on sinning against that light, the inevitable consequence must be the spiritual Fire. It is not merely a fortuitous incident. As his rejection was deliberate and definite, so the consequences must be of an abiding character.

They rebelled against Moses and murmured
In the wilderness ; the Prophets they slew
And the Signs they rejected ; they falsified
Scripture and turned their backs on righteousness

SECTION 5.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>40. ④ Children of Israel ! call to mind
The (special) favour which I bestowed
Upon you, and fulfil your Covenant⁵⁸
With Me as I fulfil My Covenant
With you, and fear none but Me.</p> | <p>٤٠- يٰبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي
أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِيْ أُوفِ
بِعَهْدِكُمْ
وَإِيَّائِي فَارْهَبُونِ ۝</p> |
| <p>41. And believe in what I reveal,⁵⁹
Confirming the revelation
Which is with you,
And be not the first to reject
Faith therein, nor sell My Signs
For a small price ; and fear Me,
And Me alone.</p> | <p>٤١- وَإِمْنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ
وَلَا تَكُونُوا أَوَّلَ كَافِرِيْهِمْ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا
بِآيَاتِيْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
وَإِيَّائِي فَاتَّقُونِ ۝</p> |
| <p>42. And cover not Truth
With falsehood, nor conceal
The Truth when ye know
(what it is).</p> | <p>٤٢- وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا
الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝</p> |
| <p>43. And be steadfast in prayer ;
Practise regular charity ;
And bow down your heads⁶⁰
With those who bow down
(in worship).</p> | <p>٤٣- وَأَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا
مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ۝</p> |
| <p>44. Do ye enjoin right conduct
On the people, and forget
(To practise it) yourselves,
And yet ye study the Scripture ?
Will ye not understand ?</p> | <p>٤٤- أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ
أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ
أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ۝</p> |

58. The appeal is made to Israel subjectively in terms of their own tradition. You claim to be a favoured nation ; have you forgotten My favours ? You claim a special Covenant with Me · I have fulfilled My part of the Covenant by bringing you out of the land of bondage and giving you Canaan, the land "flowing with milk and honey"; how have you fulfilled your part of the Covenant ? Do you fear for your national existence ? If you fear Me, nothing else will matter.

59. You received revelations before · now comes one confirming it : its first appeal should be to you : are you to be the first to reject it ? And reject it for what ? God's Signs are worth more than all your paltry considerations. And the standard of duty and righteousness is to be taken from God, and not from priests and customs.

60. The argument is still primarily addressed to the Jews, but is of universal application, as in all the teachings of the Qur-ān, The chief feature of Jewish worship was and is the bowing of the head,

45. Nay, seek (God's) help
With patient perseverance⁶¹
And prayer :
It is indeed hard, except
To those who bring a lowly
spirit,—

٣٥- وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا
لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ۝

46. Who bear in mind the certainty
That they are to meet their Lord,
And that they are to return to Him.

٣٦- الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۝

SECTION 6.

47. ⑥ Children of Israel ! call to
mind
The (special) favour which I
bestowed
Upon you,⁶² and that I preferred
you
To all others (for My Message).

٣٧- يٰٓأَيُّهَا إِسْرَآءِيلُ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي
أَنعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى
الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

48. Then guard yourselves against a
day
When one soul shall not avail
another
Nor shall intercession be accepted
for her,
Nor shall compensation be taken
from her,
Nor shall anyone be helped
(from outside).⁶³

٣٨- وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ
نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا
وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ
وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ
وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ۝

49. And remember, We delivered
you
From the people of Pharaoh : they
set you
Hard tasks and punishments,
slaughtered

٣٩- وَإِذْ بَغَيْنَاكُمْ مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ
سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُدَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَ
يَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ

61. The Arabic word *Ṣabr* implies many shades of meaning, which it is impossible to comprehend in one English word. It implies (1) patience in the sense of being thorough, not hasty; (2) patient perseverance, constancy, steadfastness, firmness of purpose; (3) systematic as opposed to spasmodic or chance action; (4) a cheerful attitude of resignation and understanding in sorrow, defeat, or suffering, as opposed to murmuring or rebellion, but saved from mere passivity or listlessness, by the element of constancy or steadfastness.

62. These words are recapitulated from ii. 40, which introduced a general account of God's favours to Israel; now we are introduced to a particular account of incidents in Israel's history. Each incident is introduced by the Arabic word "*Is*," which is indicated in the translation by "Remember."

63. Before passing to particular incidents, the conclusion is stated. Be on your guard; do not think that special favours exempt you from the personal responsibility of each soul,

Your sons and let your women-folk
live;⁶⁴
Therein was a tremendous trial
from your Lord.

وَفِي ذَٰلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ
عَظِيمٌ

50. And remember We divided
The Sea for you and saved you
And drowned Pharaoh's people
Within your very sight.⁶⁵

٥٠- وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ وَ
أَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ

51. And remember We appointed
Forty nights for Moses,⁶⁶
And in his absence ye took
The calf (for worship),
And ye did grievous wrong.

٥١- وَإِذْ وَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ
اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِي
وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

52. Even then We did forgive you;⁶⁷
There was a chance for you
To be grateful.

٥٢- ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَشْكُرُونَ

53. And remember We gave
Moses the Scripture and the
Criterion⁶⁸

٥٣- وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ الْكِتَابَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ

64. The bondage of Egypt was indeed a tremendous trial. Even the Egyptians' wish to spare the lives of Israel's females when the males were slaughtered, added to the bitterness of Israel. Their hatred was cruel, but their "love" was still more cruel. About the hard tasks, see Exod. i. 14: "They made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour." Pharaoh's taskmasters gave no straw, yet ordered the Israelites to make bricks without straw: Exod. v. 5-19. Pharaoh's decree was: "Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive": Exod. i. 22. It was in consequence of this decree that Moses was hidden three months after he was born, and when he could be hidden no longer, he was put into an ark of bulrushes and cast into the Nile, where he was found by Pharaoh's daughter and wife (xxviii. 9), and adopted into the family: Exod. ii. 2-10. Cf. xx. 37-40. Thus Moses was brought up by the enemies of his people. He was chosen by God to deliver his people, and God's wisdom made the learning and experience and even cruelties of the Egyptian enemies themselves to contribute to the salvation of his people.

65. When the Israelites at last escaped from Egypt, they were pursued by Pharaoh and his host. By a miracle the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, but the host of Pharaoh was drowned: Exod. xiv. 5-31.

66. This was after the Ten Commandments and the Laws and Ordinances had been given on Mount Sinai: Moses was asked up into the Mount, and he was there forty days and forty nights: Exod. xxiv. 18. But the people got impatient of the delay, made a calf of melted gold, and offered worship and sacrifice to it: Exod. xxxii. 1-8.

67. Moses prayed for his people, and God forgave them. This is the language of the Qur-ān. The Old Testament version is rougher: "The Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people": Exod. xxxii. 14. The Muslim position has always been that the Jewish (and Christian) scriptures as they stand cannot be traced direct to Moses or Jesus, but are later compilations. Modern scholarship and Higher Criticism has left no doubt on the subject. But the stories in these traditional books may be used in an appeal to those who use them: only they should be spiritualized, as they are here, and especially in ii. 54 below.

68. God's revelation, the expression of God's Will, is the true standard of right and wrong. It may be in a Book or in God's dealings in history. All these may be called His Signs or Miracles. In this passage some commentators take the Scripture and the Criterion (Furqān) to be identical. Others take them to be two distinct things: Scripture being the written Book and the Criterion being other Signs. I agree with the latter view. The word Furqān also occurs in xxi. 48 in connection with Moses and Aaron and in the first verse of Sūra xxv, as well as in its title, in connection with Muhammad. As Aaron received no Book, Furqān must mean the other Signs. Muṣṭafā has both the Book and the other Signs: perhaps here too we take the other Signs as supplementing the Book. Cf. Wordsworth's "Arbiter undisturbed of right and wrong." (Prelude, Book 4.)

(Between right and wrong) : there
was
A chance for you to be guided
aright.

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ○

54. And remember Moses said
To his people : " O my people !
Ye have indeed wronged
Yourselves by your worship of the
calf :
So turn (in repentance) to your
Maker,
And slay yourselves (the
wrong-doers),⁶⁹
That will be better for you
In the sight of your Maker."
Then He turned towards you (in
forgiveness) :
For He is Oft-Returning, Most
Merciful.

٥٣- وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ يُقَوْمُوا إِنَّكُمْ
ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ فَتُوبُوا
إِلَىٰ بَارِيكُمْ فَانْتَشِلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ
ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِيكُمْ
فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ○

55. And remember ye said :⁷⁰
" O Moses !
We shall never believe in thee
Until we see God manifestly,"
But ye were dazed
With thunder and lightning
Even as ye looked on.

٥٥- وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَسُوعَىٰ لَنُؤْمِنَ لَكَ
حَتَّىٰ نَرَىٰ اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذْنَا لَكُمْ الضُّعْفَةَ
وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ○

56. Then We raised you up
After your death :
Ye had the chance
To be grateful.

٥٦- ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكُمْ مِن بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَنَسْكَوْا
تَشْكُرُونَ ○

57. And We gave you the shade of
clouds

٥٧- وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ

69. Moses's speech may be construed literally, as translated, in which case it reproduces Exod. on xxxii. 27-28 but in a much softened form, for the Old Testament says : " Go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour . . . and there fell of the people that day 3,000 men." A more spiritualized version would be that the order for slaying was given by way of trial, but was withdrawn, for God turned to them in forgiveness. A still more spiritualized way of construing it would be to take " *anfusakum* " as meaning " souls," not " selves." Then the sense of Moses's speech (abbreviated) would be : " By the worship of the calf you have wronged your own souls ; repent : mortify (=slay) your souls now ; it will be better in the sight of God."

The word here translated Maker [*Bārī*] has also in it a touch of the root-meaning of " liberator,"—an apt word as referring to the Israelites, who had just been liberated from bondage in Egypt.

70. We have hitherto had instances from the Jewish traditional *Taurāt* (or Pentateuch). Now we have some instances from Jewish traditions in the Talmud, or body of exposition in the Jewish theological schools. They are based on the Jewish scriptures, but add many marvellous details and homilies. As to seeing God, we have in Exod. xxxiii. 20 : " And He said, ' Thou canst not see My face : for there shall no man see Me and live.' " The punishment for insisting on seeing God was therefore death : but those who rejected faith were forgiven, and yet they were ungrateful.

And sent down to you
Manna ⁷¹ and quails, saying :
" Eat of the good things
We have provided for you : "
(But they rebelled) ;
To Us they did no harm,
But they harmed their own souls.

الْمَنِّ وَالسَّلَوى
كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ
وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ○

58. And remember We said :
" Enter this town,⁷² and eat
Of the plenty therein
As ye wish ; but enter
The gate with humility,
In posture and in words,
And We shall forgive you your
faults
And increase (the portion of)
Those who do good."

٥٨- وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ
فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَادْخُلُوا
الْبَابَ سَبْعًا وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ تَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
خَطِيئَتَكُمْ
وَسَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○

59. But the transgressors
Changed the word from that
Which had been given them ;
So We sent on the transgressors
A plague from heaven,
For that they infringed
(Our command) repeatedly.

٥٩- فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي
قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا
مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ۝

SECTION 7.

60. And remember Moses prayed
For water for his people ;
We said : " Strike the rock
With thy staff." Then gushed
forth

٦٠- وَإِذْ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا
اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ

71. Manna=Hebrew, *Man-hu* ; Arabic *Mā-huwa* ?—What is it ? In Exod. xvi. 14, it is described as " a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground." It usually rotted if left over till next day : it melted in the hot sun ; the amount necessary for each man was about an Omer, a Hebrew measure of capacity equal to about 2½ quarts. This is the Hebrew account, probably distorted by traditional exaggeration. The actual Manna found to this day in the Sinai region is a gummy saccharine secretion found on a species of Tamarisk. It is produced by the puncture of a species of insect like the cochineal, just as lac is produced by the puncture of the lac insect on certain trees in India. As to quails, large flights of them are driven by winds in the Eastern Mediterranean in certain seasons of the year, as was witnessed during the Great War of 1914-1918 by many Indian officers who campaigned between Egypt and Palestine.

72. This probably refers to Shittim. It was the " town of acacias," just east of the Jordan, where the Israelites were guilty of debauchery and the worship of and sacrifices to false gods (Num. xxv. 1-2, also 8-9) ; a terrible punishment ensued, including the plague, of which 24,000 died. The word which the transgressors changed may have been a pass-word. In the Arabic text it is "*Huffatun*" which implies humility and a prayer of forgiveness, a fitting emblem to distinguish them from their enemies. From this particular incident a more general lesson may be drawn ; in the hour of triumph we are to behave humbly as in God's sight, and our conduct should be exemplary according to God's word ; otherwise our arrogance will draw its own punishment.

These verses, 58-59, may be compared with vii. 161-162. There are two verbal differences. Here (ii. 58) we have " enter the town " and in vii. 161 we have " dwell in this town." Again in ii. 59 here we have " infringed (Our command)," and in vii. 162, we have " transgressed." The verbal differences make no difference to the sense.

Therefrom twelve springs.
Each group⁷³ knew its own place
For water. So eat and drink
Of the sustenance provided by God
And do no evil nor mischief
On the (face of the) earth

اِنَّتَا عَشْرَةٌ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ اُنَاسٍ
مَشْرِبَهُمْ كُلُّوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ اللَّهِ وَ
لَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ۝

61. And remember ye said :
" O Moses ! we cannot endure
One kind of food (always) ;
So beseech thy Lord for us
To produce for us of what the
earth
Groweth,—its pot-herbs, and
cucumbers,
Its garlic, lentils, and onions."
He said : " Will ye exchange
The better for the worse ?
Go ye down to any town,⁷⁴
And ye shall find what ye want !"

٧١- وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَمُوسَى لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلَى
طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا
مِمَّا تُنْبِئُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا
وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِيهَا وَبَصِلَهَا قَالَ أَسْتَبْدُونَ
الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالْذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ
إِهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ

73. Here we have a reference to the tribal organization of the Jews, which played a great part in their forty years' march through the Arabian deserts (Num. 1 and 11.) and their subsequent settlement in the land of Canaan (Josh. xiii and xiv). The twelve tribes were derived from the sons of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel (soldier of God) after he had wrestled, says Jewish tradition, with God (Genesis xxxii 28). Israel had twelve sons (Gen. xxxv, 22-26) including Levi and Joseph. The descendants of these twelve sons were the "Children of Israel" Levi's family got the priesthood and the care of the Tabernacle, they were exempted from military duties, for which the census was taken (Num. 1 47-53), and therefore from the distribution of Land in Canaan (Josh. xiv. 3) : they were distributed among all the Tribes, and were really a privileged caste and not numbered among the Tribes ; Moses and Aaron belonged to the house of Levi. On the other hand Joseph, on account of the high position to which he rose in Egypt as the Pharaoh's minister, was the progenitor of two tribes, one in the name of each of his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh. Thus there were twelve Tribes in all, as Levi was cut out and Joseph represented two tribes. Their having fixed stations and watering places in camp and fixed territorial areas later in the Promised Land prevented confusion and mutual jealousies and is pointed to as an evidence of the Providence of God acting through His prophet Moses. Cf. also vii 160.

The gushing of twelve springs from a rock evidently refers to a local tradition well known to Jews and Arabs in Mustafā's time. Near Horeb close to Mount Sinai where the Law was given to Moses, is a huge mass of red granite, twelve feet high and about fifty feet in circumference, where European travellers (e.g., Brevdenbach in the fifteenth century after Christ) saw abundant springs of water twelve in number (see Sale's notes on this passage). It existed in Mustafā's time and may still exist to the present day, for anything we know to the contrary. The Jewish tradition would be based on Exod. xvii. 6 "Thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it that the people may drink."

The story is used as a parable as is clear from the latter part of the verse. In the desolation and among the rocks of this life people grumble. But they will not be starving or thirsty of spiritual life. God's Messenger can provide abundant spiritual sustenance even from such unpromising things as the hard rocks of life. And all the nations can be grouped round it, each different, yet each in perfect order and discipline. We are to use with gratitude all spiritual food and drink provided by God, and He sometimes provides from unexpected places. We must restrain ourselves from mischief, pride, and every kind of evil, for our higher life is based on our probation on this very earth.

74. The declension of the word *Misr* in the Arabic text here shows that it is treated as a common noun meaning any town, but this is not conclusive, and the reference may be to the Egypt of Pharaoh. The *Tanwīn* expressing indefiniteness may mean "any Egypt", i.e. any country as fertile as Egypt. There is here a subtle reminiscence as well as a severe reproach. The rebellious children of Israel murmured at the sameness of the food they got in the desert. They were evidently hankering after the delicacies of the Egypt which they had left, although they should have known that the only thing certain for them in Egypt was their bondage and harsh treatment. Moses's reproach to them was twofold : (1) Such variety of foods you can get in any town would you, for their sake, sell your freedom ? Is not freedom better than delicate food ? (2) In front is the rich Promised Land, which you are reluctant to march to, behind is Egypt, the land of bondage. Which is better ? Would you exchange the better for the worse ?

They were covered with
humiliation⁷⁵
And misery ; they drew
On themselves the wrath of God.
This because they went on
Rejecting the Signs of God
And slaying His Messengers
Without just cause.
This because they rebelled
And went on transgressing.

SECTION 8.

62. Those who believe (in the
Qur-ān),
And those who follow the Jewish
(scriptures),
And the Christians and the
Sabians,⁷⁶ —
Any who believe in God
And the Last Day,
And work righteousness,
Shall have their reward

وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ
وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّنَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ
ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ

۶۲- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا
وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّبِيَّةَ
مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا
فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ

75. From here the argument becomes more general. They got the Promised Land. But they continued to rebel against God. And their humiliation and misery became a national disaster. They were carried in captivity to Assyria. They were restored under the Persians, but still remained under the Persian yoke and they were under the yoke of the Greeks, the Romans, and Arabs. They were scattered all over the earth, and have been a wandering people ever since, because they rejected faith, slew God's messengers, and went on transgressing.

The slaying of the Prophets begins with the murder of Abel, who was in the ancestry of Israel. The elder sons of Jacob attempted the murder of Joseph when they dropped him into the well, and if he was afterwards rescued by strangers, their blood-guilt was none the less. In later history they attempted to slay Jesus, inasmuch as they got the Roman Governor to crucify one in his likeness, and they attempted to take the life of Mustafā.

But the moral goes wider than the Children of Israel. It applies to all nations and all individuals. If they are stiff-necked, if they set a greater value on perishable goods than on freedom and eternal salvation, if they break the law of God and resist His grace, their portion must be humiliation and misery in the spiritual world and probably even on this earth if a long view is taken.

76. Latest researches have revealed a small remnant of a religious community numbering about 2,000 souls in Lower Iraq, near Basra. In Arabic they are called *Subbī* (plural, *Subbā*). They are also called Sabians and Nasoræans or Mandæans, or Christians of St. John. They claim to be Gnostics, or Knowers of the Great Life. They dress in white, and believe in frequent immersions in water. Their Book *Ginza* is in a dialect of Aramaic. They have theories of Darkness and Light as in Zoroastrianism. They use the name *Yardan* (Jordan) for any river. They live in peace and harmony among their Muslim neighbours. They resemble the Sabi-ūn mentioned in the Qur-ān, but are not probably identical with them.

The pseudo-Sabians of Harrān, who attracted the attention of Khalifa Māmūn al-Rashid in 830 A.D. by their long hair and peculiar dress, probably adopted the name as it was mentioned in the Qur-ān, in order to claim the privileges of the People of the Book. They were Syrian star-worshippers with Hellenistic tendencies, like the Jews contemporary with Jesus. It is doubtful whether they had any right to be called People of the Book in the technical sense of the term. But I think that in this matter (though many authorities would dissent) the term can be extended by analogy to cover earnest followers of Zoroaster, the Vedas, Buddha, Confucius and other Teachers of the moral law.

There was another people called the Sabæans, who played an important part in the history of early Arabia, and are known through their inscriptions in an alphabet allied to the Phœnician and the Babylonian. They had a flourishing kingdom in the Yemen tract in South Arabia about 800-700 B.C., though their origin may have been in North Arabia. They worshipped the planets and stars (Moon, Sun, Venus). Probably the Queen of Sheba is connected with them. They succumbed to Abyssinia about 350 A.D. and to Persia about 579 A.D. Their capital was near San'a. They had beautiful stone buildings, in which the pointed arch is noticeable. (See E. B. on Sabæans).

With their Lord : on them
Shall be no fear, nor shall they
grieve."

63. And remember We took
Your Covenant
And We raised above you
(The towering height)
Of Mount (Sinai) ⁷⁸ :
(Saying) : " Hold firmly
To what We have given you
And bring (ever) to remembrance
What is therein :
Perchance ye may fear God."

64. But ye turned back thereafter :
Had it not been for the Grace
And Mercy of God to you,
Ye had surely been
Among the lost.

65. And well ye knew
Those amongst you
Who transgressed
In the matter of the Sabbath :
We said to them :
" Be ye apes,
Despised and rejected." ⁷⁹

66. So We made it an example
To their own time

وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٦٣- وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ
الطُّورَ

خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ
وَادْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ○

٦٤- ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَلَوْلَا
فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ○

٦٥- وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدُوا مِنْكُمْ
فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ
كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِرِينَ ○

٦٦- فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا

77. Cf. ii. 38, where the same phrase occurs. And it recurs again and again afterwards.

The point of the verse is that Islam does not teach an exclusive doctrine, and is not meant exclusively for one people. The Jews claimed this for themselves, and the Christians in their origin were a sect of the Jews. Even the modern organized Christian churches, though they have been, consciously or unconsciously, influenced by the Time-spirit, including the historical fact of Islam, yet cling to the idea of Vicarious Atonement, which means that all who do not believe in it or who lived previously to the death of Christ are at a disadvantage spiritually before the Throne of God. The attitude of Islam is entirely different. Islam existed before the preaching of Muhammad on this earth : the Qur-ān expressly calls Abraham a Muslim (iii. 67). Its teaching (submission to God's will) has been and will be the teaching of Religion for all time and for all peoples.

78. The Mountain of Sinai (*Tūr-u-Sinān*), a prominent mountain in the Arabian desert, in the peninsula between the two arms of the Red Sea. Here the Ten Commandments and the Law were given to Moses. Hence it is now called the Mountain of Moses (*Jabal Mūsa*). The Israelites encamped at the foot of it for nearly a year. The Covenant was taken from them under many portents (Exod. xix. 5, 8, 16, 18), which are described in Jewish tradition in great detail. Under thunder and lightning the mountain must indeed have appeared an awe-inspiring sight above to the Camp at its foot. And the people solemnly entered into the Covenant : all the people answered together and said, " All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."

79. The punishment for breach of the Sabbath under the Mosaic law was death. " Every one that defileth it (the Sabbath) shall surely be put to death : for whosoever doth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people " : (Exod. xxxi. 14). There must have been a Jewish tradition about a whole fishing community in a seaside town, which persisted in breaking the Sabbath and were turned into apes : cf. vii. 163-166. Or should we translate in both these passages, " Be as apes ", instead of " Be apes " ? This is the suggestion of Maulvi Muhammad 'Alī on this passage, on the authority of Mujāhid and Ibn Jarir Ṭabarī. The punishment would be, not for the breach of the Sabbath in itself, but for their contemptuous defiance of the Law.

And to their posterity,
And a lesson
To those who fear God.

67. And remember Moses said
To his people : " God commands
That ye sacrifice a heifer."⁸⁰
They said : " Makest thou
A laughing-stock of us ?"
He said : " God save me
From being an ignorant (fool) !"

68. They said : " Beseech on our
behalf
Thy Lord to make plain to us
What (heifer) it is !"
He said : " He says : the heifer
Should be neither too old
Nor too young, but of middling
Age : now do what ye are
commanded !"

69. They said : " Beseech on our
behalf
Thy Lord to make plain to us
Her colour." He said : " He says :
A fawn-coloured heifer,
Pure and rich in tone,
The admiration of beholders !"

70. They said : " Beseech on our
behalf
Thy Lord to make plain to us
What she is : to us are all heifers
Alike : we wish indeed for guidance,
If God wills."

خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ○

٦٧- وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا
هَٰذَا قَالِ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ
الْجَاهِلِينَ ○

٦٨- قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَّنَا مَا هِيَ
قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا
بَكْرٌ
عَوْنٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ
فَفَعَلُوا مَا تَأْمُرُونَ ○

٦٩- قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَّنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا
قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ صَفْرَاءُ فَاقْمِ
لَوْنَهَا فَفَعَلَ النَّظِيرِينَ ○

٧٠- قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَّنَا مَا هِيَ
إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشْبَهُ عَلَيْنَا
وَلَئِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ ○

80. This story or parable of the heifer in ii. 67-71 should be read with the parable of the dead man brought to life in ii. 72-73. The stories were accepted in Jewish traditions, which are themselves based on certain sacrificial directions in the Old Testament. The heifer story of Jewish tradition is based on Num. xix. 1-10, in which Moses and Aaron ordered the Israelites to sacrifice a red heifer without spot or blemish ; her body was to be burnt and the ashes were to be kept for the purification of the congregation from sin. The parable of the dead man we shall refer to later.

The lesson of the heifer parable is plain. Moses announced the sacrifice to the Israelites, and they treated it as a jest. When Moses continued solemnly to ask for the sacrifice, they put him off on one pretext and another, asking a number of questions which they could have answered themselves if they had listened to Moses's directions. Their questions were carping criticisms rather than the result of a desire for information. It was a mere thin pretence that they were genuinely seeking for guidance. When at last they were driven into a corner, they made the sacrifice, but the will was wanting, which would have made the sacrifice efficacious for purification from sin. The real reason for their prevarications was their guilty conscience, as we see in the parable of the dead man (ii. 72-73).

71. He said : " He says : a heifer
Not trained to till the soil
Or water the fields ; sound
And without blemish." They said :
" Now hast thou brought
The truth." Then they offered
Her in sacrifice,
But not with good-will.

SECTION 9.

72. Remember ye slew a man⁸¹
And fell into a dispute
Among yourselves as to the crime :
But God was to bring forth
What ye did hide.

73. So We said : " Strike the (body)
With a piece of the (heifer)."
Thus God bringeth the dead
To life and showeth you His
Signs :
Perchance ye may understand.

74. Henceforth were your hearts
Hardened : they became
Like a rock and even worse
In hardness. For among rocks
There are some from which
Rivers gush forth ; others
There are which when split
Asunder send forth water ;
And others which sink

٤١- قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولَ تُثِيرُ
الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا
شِيَةَ فِيهَا قَالُوا لَنْ نَجِدَ بِالْحَقِّ فَنَذْبُوهَا
وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ۖ

٤٢- وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَرَأْتُمُ فِيهَا
وَاللَّهُ يُخْرِجُ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ۖ

٤٣- فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا
كَذَلِكَ يُخَيِّ اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَى
وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۖ

٤٤- ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً وَإِنْ مِنَ
الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنْ
مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشْقُقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ وَإِنْ
مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ

81. In Deut. xxi. 1-9 it is ordained that if the body of a slain man be found in a field and the slayer is not known, a heifer shall be beheaded, and the elders of the city next to the slain man's domicile shall wash their hands over the heifer and say that they neither did the deed nor saw it done, thus clearing themselves from the blood-guilt.

The Jewish story based on this was that in a certain case of this kind, every one tried to clear himself of guilt and lay the blame at the door of others. In the first place they tried to prevaricate and prevent a heifer being slain as in the last parable. When she was slain, God by a miracle disclosed the really guilty person. A portion of the sacrificed heifer was ordered to be placed on the corpse, which came to life and disclosed the whole story of the crime.

The lesson of this parable is that men may try to hide their crimes individually or collectively, but God will bring them to light in unexpected ways. Applying this further to Jewish national history, the argument is developed in the following verses that the Children of Israel played fast and loose with their own rites and traditions, but they could not thus evade the consequences of their own sin.

For fear of God. And God is
Not unmindful of what ye do.⁸²

75. Can ye (O ye men of Faith)
Entertain the hope that they
Will believe in you ?—
Seeing that a party of them
Heard the Word of God,
And perverted it knowingly
After they understood it.
76. Behold ! when they meet⁸³
The men of Faith, they say :
" We believe " : but when
They meet each other in private,
They say : " Shall you tell them
What God hath revealed to you,
That they may engage you
In argument about it
Before your Lord ? "—
Do ye not understand (their aim) ?
77. Know they not that God
Knoweth what they conceal
And what they reveal ?

مَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ○

٤٥- أَتَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ
فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ
يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ ○

٤٦- وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَ
إِذَا خَلَا بِغُضِّهِمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ قَالُوا لَئِنْ
كُنَّا لَمَعِنَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ
عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ ○
أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ○

٤٧- أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ
وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ○

82. The sinner's heart gets harder and harder. It is even harder than rocks of which a beautiful poetical allegory is placed before us. In nature we think there is nothing harder than rocks. But there are rocks that weep voluntarily, like repentant hearts that come to God of their own accord : such are rocks from which rivers and springs flow spontaneously, sometimes in small trickles, sometimes in big volumes. Then there are rocks which have to be split or dug into or blown up with dynamite, and underneath we find abundant waters, as in wells beneath rocky soil. Such are the hearts of a less degree of fineness, which yet melt into tears when some great blow or calamity calls the mind to higher things. And lastly, there are the rocks which slip or sink by geological pressure or in an earthquake, and send forth large spouts of water, as happened, for example, in the Bihar earthquake of 1934 : such sinking or quaking may be poetically ascribed to tear. So there are hearts which will come to God by no higher motive than fear, but yet fear, melt them into tears of repentance. But the hardened sinner is worse than all these. His case is worse than that of rocks, for nothing will melt him.

83. The immediate argument applies to the Jews of Medina, but the more general argument applies to the people of Faith and the people without Faith, as we shall see below. If the Muslims of Medina ever entertained the hope and the Jews in their city would as a body welcome Muhammad Mustafā as the Prophet prophesied in their own books, they were mistaken. In Deut. xviii, 18, they read : " I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee," i.e., like unto Moses) : which was interpreted by some of their doctors as referring to Muhammad, and they came into Islam. The Arabs are a kindred branch of the Semitic family, and are correctly described in relation to the Jews as " their brethren " : and there is no question that there was not another Prophet " like unto Moses " until Muhammad came : in fact the postscript of Deuteronomy, which was written many centuries after Moses, says : " There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." But the Jews as a body were jealous of Muhammad, and played a double part. When the Muslim community began to grow stronger they pretended to be of them, but really tried to keep back any knowledge of their own Scriptures from them, lest they should be beaten by their own arguments.

The more general interpretation holds good in all ages. Faith and Unfaith are pitted against each other. Faith has to struggle against power, position, organization, and privilege. When it gains ground, Unfaith comes forward insincerely and claims fellowship. But in its own mind it is jealous of the armoury of science and knowledge which Faith brings into the service of God. But God knows all, and if the people of Faith will only seek knowledge sincerely wherever they can find it,—even as far afield as China, as Muhammad said, they can defeat Unfaith on its own ground.

78. And there are among them⁸⁴
 Illiterates, who know not the Book,
 But (see therein their own) desires,
 And they do nothing but
 conjecture.

٧٨- وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ
 إِلَّا أَمَانِي وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ○

79. Then woe to those who write
 The Book with their own hands,
 And then say : This is from God."
 To traffic with it
 For a miserable price !—
 Woe to them for what their hands
 Do write, and for the gain
 They make thereby.

٧٩- قَوْلِيلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ
 ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ
 شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا قَوْلِيلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كُتِبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ
 وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ○

80. And they say : " The Fire⁸⁵
 Shall not touch us
 But for a few numbered days : "
 Say : " Have ye taken a promise
 From God, for He never
 Breaks His promise ?
 Or is it that ye say of God
 What ye do not know ? "

٨٠- وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً
 قُلْ أَتُحَدِّثُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ
 اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا
 تَعْلَمُونَ ○

81. Nay, those who seek gain⁸⁶
 In Evil, and are girt round
 By their sins,—
 They are Companions of the Fire :
 Therein shall they abide
 (For ever).

٨١- بَلَى مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ
 خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
 هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

82. But those who have faith
 And work righteousness,

٨٢- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ

84. The argument of i. 76 is continued. The Jews wanted to keep back knowledge, but what knowledge had they? Many of them, even if they could read, were no better than illiterates, for they knew not their own true Scriptures, but read into them what they wanted, or at best their own conjectures. They palmed off their own writings for the Message of God. Perhaps it brought them profit for the time being : but it was a miserable profit if they "gained the whole world and lost their own souls" (Matt. xvi. 26). "Writing with their own hands" means inventing books themselves, which had no divine authority.

The general argument is similar. Unfaith erects its own false gods. It attributes things to causes which only exist in its own imagination. Sometimes it even indulges in actual dishonest traffic in the ignorance of the multitude. It may pay for a time, but the bubble always bursts.

85. The Jews in their arrogance might say : Whatever the terror of Hell may be for other people, our sins will be forgiven, because we are children of Abraham : at worst, we shall suffer a short definite punishment and then be restored to the "bosom of Abraham." This bubble is pricked here. Read this verse with ii. 81-82.

The general application is also clear. If Unfaith claims some special prerogative, such as race, "civilization," political power, historical experience, and so on, these will not avail in God's sight. His promise is sure, but His promise is for those who seek God in Faith, and show it in their conduct.

86. This is many degrees worse than merely falling into evil : it is going out to "earn evil," as the Arabic text has it, i.e., to seek gain in evil. Such a perverse attitude means that the moral and spiritual fortress erected around us by the Grace of God is voluntarily surrendered by us and demolished by Evil, which erects its own fortress, so that access to God may be more and more difficult.

They are Companions of the
Garden :
Therein shall they abide
(For ever).

SECTION 10.

83. And remember We took⁸⁷
A Covenant from the Children
Of Israel (to this effect) :
Worship none but God ;
Treat with kindness
Your parents and kindred,
And orphans and those in need ;
Speak fair to the people ;
Be steadfast in prayer ;
And practise regular charity.
Then did ye turn back,
Except a few among you,
And ye backslide (even now).

84. And remember We took⁸⁸
Your Covenant (to this effect) :
Shed no blood amongst you,
Nor turn out your own people
From your homes : and this
Ye solemnly ratified,
And to this ye can bear witness.

85. After this it is ye, the same people,
Who slay among yourselves,
And banish a party of you
From their homes ; assist
(Their enemies) against them,
In guilt and rancour ;
And if they come to you
As captives, ye ransom⁸⁹ them,

أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ٨٣

٨٣- وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ لَا
تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۖ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا
وَرِزَى الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَ
قُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا ۚ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَ
آتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ۚ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ
وَأَنْتُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ٨٤

٨٤- وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ
دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِّنْ
دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ٨٥

٨٥- ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَ
تُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظْهَرُونَ
عَلَيْهِمْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن ۚ وَإِنْ
يَأْتِيَكُمُ اسْرَىٰ تَغْدُوهُمْ

87. So far from the Covenant being of the kind you suggest in ii. 80, the real Covenant is about the moral law, which is set out in ii. 83. This moral law is universal, and if you break it, no privileges will lighten your punishment or help you in any way (ii. 86). "Speak fair to the people" not only means outward courtesy from the leaders to the meanest among the people, but the protection of the people from being exploited, deceived, defrauded, or doped with things to lull their intelligence.

88. Verse 83 referred to the universal moral law. This verse 84 refers to its application under a special Covenant entered into with the Jews of Medina by the new-born Muslim Commonwealth under its Guide and teacher Muhammad. This Covenant is given in Ibn Hisham's *Sirat-ur-Rasul*, and comments on it will be found in Ameer 'Ali's *Spirit of Islam* (London, 1922), pp. 57-61. It was entered into in the second year of the Hijra, and was treacherously broken by the Jews almost immediately afterwards.

89. I understand "ransom them" here to mean "take ransom for them," though most of the Commentators take it to mean "give ransom for them." Mustafā had made a Pact which, if it had been faithfully observed by all parties, would have brought a reign of law and order for Medina. But some of the treacherous Jews never intended to observe its terms. They fought and slew each other and not only banished those who were obnoxious to them but intrigued with their enemies. If by any chance they came back into their hands as captives, they demanded ransom for them to return to their homes although they had no right to banish them at all. If we understand by "ransom them" pay "ransom for them to release them from the hands of their enemies," it would mean that they did this pious act for show, although they were themselves the authors of their unlawful banishment. I think the former makes better sense.

Though it was not lawful
For you to banish them.
Then is it only a part of the Book
That ye believe in,
And do ye reject the rest ?
But what is the reward for those
Among you who behave like this
But disgrace in this life ?—
And on the Day of Judgment
They shall be consigned
To the most grievous penalty.
For God is not unmindful
Of what ye do.

وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ
أَتَنْتَوُْمُنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ
بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ
إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
يُرَدُّونَ إِلَى أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ
وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ○

86. These are the people who buy
The life of this world at the price
Of the Hereafter : their penalty
Shall not be lightened
Nor shall they be helped.

۸۶- أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يَخَفَتْ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ
وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ۝

C. 47.—The people of Moses and the people of Jesus
(ii. 87-121.) Were given revelations, but alas !
They played false with their own lights,
And, in their selfishness, made narrow
God's universal message. To them
It seemed incredible that His light
Should illumine Arabia and reform
The world. But His ways are wondrous,
And they are clear to those who have Faith.

SECTION 11.

87. We gave Moses the Book
And followed him up
With a succession of Apostles ;^{89-A}
We gave Jesus the son of Mary⁹⁰
Clear (Signs) and strengthened him
With the holy spirit. Is it
That whenever there comes to you
An Apostle with what ye
Yourselves desire not, ye are
Puffed up with pride ?—
Some ye called impostors,
And others ye slay !⁹¹

۸۷- وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ
بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَآيَدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ
أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى
أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ
فَقَرَّبْنَا كَذِبَتْكُمْ وَقَرَّبْنَا نَقْتُلُونَ ○

89-A. The word "apostle" is used here and throughout the Translation in the literal sense of "One Sent," and not in a specialized sense.

90. As to the birth of Jesus, cf., xix. 16-34. Why is he called the "Son of Mary" ? What are his "clear signs" ? What is the "holy spirit" by which he was strengthened ? We reserve to a later stage a discussion of the Quranic teaching on these questions. See iii, 62, n. 401.

91. Notice the sudden transition from the past tense in "some ye called impostors" to the present tense in "others ye slay." There is a double significance. First, reviewing the long course of Jewish history, we have come to the time of Jesus : they have often given the lie to God's Apostles, and even now they are trying to slay Jesus. Secondly, extending the review of that history to the time of Muhammad, they are even now trying to take the life of that holy Apostle. This would be literally true at the time the words were promulgated to the people. And this transition leads on naturally to the next verse, which refers to the actual conditions before Muhammad in Medina in the second year of Hijra.

Sections 11-13 (ii. 87-121) refer to the People of the Book generally, Jews and Christians. Even where Moses and the Law of Sinai are referred to, those traditions are common to both Jews and Christians. The argument is about the people who ought to have learnt from previous Revelations and welcomed Muhammad's teaching, and yet they both took up an attitude of arrogant rejection.

88. They say, " Our hearts
Are the wrappings⁹² (which
preserve
God's Word : we need no more)."
Nay, God's curse is on them
For their blasphemy :⁹³
Little is it they believe.

٨٨- وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ
بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ
فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

89. And when there comes to them
A Book⁹⁴ from God, confirming
What is with them,—although
From of old they had prayed
For victory against those
Without Faith,—when there comes
To them that which they
(Should) have recognized,
They refuse to believe in it
But the curse of God
Is on those without Faith.

٨٩- وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ
مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ
وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَمَا جَاءَهُمْ
مَّا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ
فَلَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ○

90. Miserable is the price
For which they have sold
Their souls, in that they
Deny (the revelation)
Which God has sent down,
In insolent envy that God
Of His Grace should send it
To any of His servants He
pleases :⁹⁵

٩٠- بِسَمَاءٍ اشْتَرَوْا بِهَا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
أَنْ يُكَفَرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بَغْيًا
أَنْ يُنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ
مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٢

92. The Jews in their arrogance claimed that all wisdom and all knowledge of God were enclosed in their hearts. But there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in their philosophy. Their claim was not only arrogance but blasphemy. In reality they were men without Faith. (I take *Gulfan*, here to be the plural of *Gilāfun*, the wrapping or cover of a book, in which the book is preserved.)

As usual, there is much wider meaning. How many people at all times and among all nations close their hearts to any extension of knowledge or spiritual influence because of some little fragment which they have got and which they think is the whole of God's Truth? Such an attitude shows really want of faith and is a blasphemous limitation of God's unlimited spiritual gifts to His creatures.

93. The root *kafara* has many shades of meaning : (1) to deny God's goodness, to be ungrateful, (2) to reject Faith, deny His revelation, (3) to blaspheme, to ascribe some limitation or attribute to God which is derogatory to His nature. In a translation, one shade or another must be put forward according to the context, but all are implied.

94. The Jews, who pretended to be so superior to the people without Faith—the Gentiles—should have been the first to recognize the new Truth—or the Truth renewed—which it was Muhammad's mission to bring, because it was so similar in form and language to what they had already received, But they had more arrogance than faith. It is this want of faith that brings on the curse, i.e., deprives us (if we adopt such an attitude) of the blessings of God.

Again the lesson applies to much wider circle than the Jews. We are all apt, in our perverseness, to reject an appeal from our brother even more summarily than one from an outsider. If we have a glimmering of the truth, we are apt to make ourselves impervious to further truth, and thus lose the benefit of God's Grace.

95. Racial arrogance made the Jews averse to the reception of Truth when it came through a servant of God, not of their own race. Again the lesson is wider. Is that averseness unknown in our own times, and among other races? Yet how can a race or a people set bounds to God's choice? God is the Creator and Cherisher of all races and all worlds.

Thus have they drawn
On themselves Wrath upon Wrath.
And humiliating is the punishment
Of those who reject Faith.

91. When it is said to them,
"Believe in what God
Hath sent down," they say,
"We believe in what was sent
down

To us": yet they reject
All besides, even if it be Truth
Confirming what is with them.
Say: "Why then have ye slain
The prophets of God in times
Gone by,"⁹³ if ye did indeed
Believe?

92. There came to you Moses
With clear (Signs); yet
Ye worshipped the Calf
(Even) after that, and ye
Did behave wrongfully.

93. And remember We took
Your Covenant and We raised
Above you (the towering height)
Of Mount (Sinai):
(Saying): "Hold firmly
To what We have given you,
And hearken (to the Law)":⁹⁷
They said: "We hear,
And we disobey":⁹⁸
And they had to drink⁹⁹

فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ
وَالْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ○

٩١- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
قَالُوا نُوْحِنُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا
وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ
قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ
مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٩٢- وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
ثُمَّ اخْتَلَفْتُمْ الْعُجُلَ
مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ○

٩٣- وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ
وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ
خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ
وَأَسْمِعُوا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا
وَأَشْرَبُوا

96. Even the race argument is often a flimsy and hollow pretext. Did not the Jews reject Prophets of their own race who told them unpleasant truths? And do not other nations do likewise? The real trouble is selfishness, narrowness, a mean dislike of anything which runs counter to habits, customs or inclinations.

97. Cf. the introductory words of ii. 63, which are the same as the introductory words here, but the argument is developed in a different direction in the two places. In ii. 63, after they are reminded of the solemn Covenant under the towering height of Mount Sinai, they are told how they broke the Covenant in after ages. Here, after they are reminded of the same solemn Covenant, they are told that even then they never meant to observe it. Their thought is expressed in biting words of sarcasm. They said in words: "All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do." But they said in their hearts: "We shall disobey."

98. What they should have said was: "We hear and we obey"; this is the attitude of the true men of Faith (ii. 285).

99. After the Commandments and the Law had been given at Mount Sinai and the people had solemnly given their Covenant, Moses went up to the Mount, and in his absence, the people made the golden calf. When Moses returned, his anger waxed hot. "He took the Calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." (Exod. xxxii. 20). This incident is interpreted in the Qur-an allegorically. The Calf is the symbol of disobedience, rebellion, want of faith. It was like a taint of poison. Their punishment was to swallow the taint of poison which they had themselves produced. They swallowed it not into their stomachs, but into their hearts, their very being. They had to mortify and humble themselves in the sight of God, as was shown in another allegory based on the Jewish narrative (see ii. 54 and note, above).

Into their hearts
(Of the taint) of the Calf
Because of their Faithlessness.
Say : " Vile indeed
Are the behests of your Faith
If ye have any faith ! "

94. Say : " If the last Home,
With God, be for you specially,
And not for anyone else,
Then seek ye for death,
If ye are sincere."

95. But they will never seek
For death, on account of the (sins)
Which their hands have sent
On before them.¹⁰⁰
And God is well-acquainted
With the wrong-doers.

96. Thou wilt indeed find them,
Of all people, most greedy
Of life,—even more
Than the idolaters ;
Each one of them wishes
He could be given a life
Of a thousand years :
But the grant of such life
Will not save him
From (due) punishment.
For God sees well
All that they do.

SECTION 12.

97. Say : Whoever is an enemy¹⁰¹
To Gabriel—for he brings down

فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ
قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيمَانُكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ
مُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٩٤- قُلْ إِن كَانَتْ لَكُمْ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ
اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ
فَتَسْتَبِشُوا الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ○

٩٥- وَلَن يَتَمَنَّوهُ أَبَدًا
بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ○

٩٦- وَلَيَجِدُنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَاتِهِ
فِي ذَٰلِكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا
يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعْمَرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ
وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحَّزَجِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ إِنَّ
يُعْمَرُ
وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

٩٧- قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجَبْرِئِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ

100. The phrase " What their hands have sent on before them " frequently occurs in the Qur-an. Here, and in many places, it refers to sins. In such passages, lxxviii. 40 or lxxxi. 14, it is implied that both good and bad deeds go before us to the judgment-seat of God before we do ourselves. In ii. 110, it is the good that goes before us. Our deeds are personified. They are witnesses for or against us, and they always go before us. Their good or bad influence begins to operate before we even know it. This is more general than the New Testament idea in the First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy, v. 24 : " Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment ; and some men they follow after."

101. A party of the Jews in the time of Muhammad ridiculed the Muslim belief that Gabriel brought down revelations to Muhammad Mustafâ. Michael was called in their books " the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people " : (Daniel, xii. 1). The vision of Gabriel inspired fear (Daniel, viii. 16-17). But this pretence—that Michael was their friend and Gabriel their enemy—was merely a manifestation of their unbelief in angels, apostles, and God Himself ; and such unbelief could not win the love of God. In any case it was disingenuous to say that they believed in one angel and not in another. Muhammad's inspiration was through visions of Gabriel. Muhammad had been helped to the highest spiritual light, and the message which he delivered and his spotless integrity and exemplary life were manifest Signs which every one could understand except those who were obstinate and perverse. Besides, the verses of the Qur-an were in themselves reasonable and clear.

The (revelation) to thy heart
By God's will, a confirmation
Of what went before,
And guidance and glad tidings
For those who believe,—

98. Whoever is an enemy to God
And His angels and apostles,
To Gabriel and Michael,—
Lo ! God is an enemy to those
Who reject Faith.

99. We have sent down to thee
Manifest Signs (*āyāt*) ;
And none reject them
But those who are perverse.

100. It is not (the case) that
Every time they make a Covenant,
Some party among them
Throw it aside ?—Nay,
Most of them are faithless.

101. And when came to them
An Apostle from God,
Confirming what was with them,
A party of the People of the Book
Threw away the Book of God¹⁰²
Behind their backs.
As if (it had been something)
They did not know !

102. They followed what the evil
ones¹⁰³
Gave out (falsely)
Against the power
Of Solomon : the blasphemers
Were, not Solomon, but
The evil ones, teaching men

نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا
لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى
لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٩٨- مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَلَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ
لِّلْكَافِرِينَ ○

٩٩- وَلَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ
وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا الْفَاسِقُونَ ○

١٠٠- أَوَلَمْ كُنَّا عَاهِدُوا عَهْدًا
بَيِّنَةً فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ ط

بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

١٠١- وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ

بَيَّنَّ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كَتَبَ
اللَّهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

١٠٢- وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَى

مُلْكٍ سُلَيْمَنَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَنُ وَلَكِنَّ
الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ

102. I think that by " the Book of God " here is meant, not the Qur-an, but the Book which the People of the Book had been given, viz., the previous Revelations. The argument is that Muhammad's Message was similar to Revelations which they had already received, and if they had looked into their own Books honestly and sincerely, they would have found proofs in them to show that the new Message was true and from God. But they ignored their own Books or twisted or distorted them according to their own fancies. Worse, they followed something which was actually false and mischievous and inspired by the evil one. Such was the belief in magic and sorcery. These are described in the next verse in terms referring to the beliefs and practices of the People of the Book."

103. This is a continuation of the argument in ii. 101. The People of the Book, instead of sticking to the plain Books of Revelations, and seeking to do the will of God, ran after all sorts of occult knowledge, most of which was false and evil. Many wonderful tales of occult power attributed the power of Solomon to magic. But Solomon dealt in no arts of evil. It was the powers of evil that pretended to force the laws of nature and the will of God ; such a pretence is plainly blasphemy.

Magic, and such things
As came down at Babylon
To the angels Hārūt and

Mārūt.¹⁰⁴

But neither of these taught anyone
(Such things) without saying :

"We are only for trial ;
So do not blaspheme."

They learned from them¹⁰⁵

The means to sow discord
Between man and wife.

But they could not thus

Harm anyone except

By God's permission.

And they learned what harmed
them,

Not what profited them.

And they knew that the buyers

Of (magic) would have

No share in the happiness

Of the Hereafter. And vile

Was the price for which

They did sell their souls,

If they but knew !

وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ
وَمَارُوتَ

وَمَا يَعْلَمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ

حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ

فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ

الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ

وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي

الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ

وَلَيْتَسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ

لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

103. If they had kept their Faith
And guarded themselves from evil,

۱۰۳- وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا وَآتَقُوا لَنُوبَهُ

104. This verse has been interpreted variously. Who were Hārūt and Mārūt? What did they teach? Why did they teach it? The view which commends itself to me is that of the *Tafsir Haqqānī*, following Baidhāwī and the *Tafsir Kabīr*. The word "angels" as applied to Hārūt and Mārūt is figurative. It means "good men, of knowledge, science (or wisdom), and power." In modern languages the word "angel" is applied to a good and beautiful woman. The earlier tradition made angels masculine, and applied to them the attributes which I have mentioned, along with the attribute of beauty, which has implied in goodness, knowledge, wisdom, and power.

Hārūt and Mārūt lived in Babylon, a very ancient seat of science, especially the science of astronomy. The period may be supposed to be anywhere about the time when the ancient Eastern Monarchies were strong and enlightened; probably even earlier, as Mārūtu or Marduk was a deified hero afterwards worshipped as a god of magic in Babylon. Being good men, Hārūt and Mārūt of course dabbled in nothing evil, and their hands were certainly clean of fraud. But knowledge and the arts, if learned by evil men, can be applied to evil uses. The evil ones, besides their fraudulent magic, also learnt a little of this true science and applied it to evil uses. Hārūt and Mārūt did not withhold knowledge, yet never taught anyone without plainly warning them of the trial and temptation of knowledge in the hands of evil men. Being men of insight, they also saw the blasphemy that might rise to the lips of the evil ones puffed up with science and warned them against it. Knowledge is indeed a trial or temptation; if we are warned, we know its dangers; if God has endowed us with free will, we must be free to choose between the benefit and the danger.

Among the Jewish traditions in the Midrash (Jewish *Tafsirs*) was a story of two angels who asked God's permission to come down to earth but succumbed to temptation, and were hung up by their feet at Babylon for punishment. Such stories about sinning angels who were cast down to punishment were believed in by the early Christians also. (See the Second Epistle of Peter, ii. 4, and the Epistle of Jude, verse 6). There may be an allusion to such legends here, but much spiritualized and we are expressly warned against dabbling in magic or believing that anything can hurt us except by God's will, and God is just and righteous.

105. What the evil ones learnt from Hārūt and Mārūt (see last note) they turned to evil. When mixed with fraud and deception, it appeared as charms and spells and love potions. They did nothing but cause discord between the sexes. But of course their power was limited to the extent to which God permitted the evil to work, for His grace protected all who sought His guidance and repented and returned to Him. But apart from the harm that these false pretenders might do to others, the chief harm which they did was to their own souls. They sold themselves into slavery to the Evil One, as is shown in the allegory of Goethe's *Faust*. That allegory dealt with the individual soul. Here the tragedy is shown to occur not only to individuals but to whole groups of people, for example, the People of the Book. Indeed the story might be extended indefinitely.

Far better had been
The reward from their Lord,
If they but knew !

مَنْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ
لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ٥

SECTION 13.

104. **Q** ye of Faith !
Say not (to the Apostle)
Words of ambiguous import,¹⁰⁶
But words of respect ;
And hearken (to him) :
To those without Faith
Is a grievous punishment.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنًا
وَقُولُوا انْظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا
وَاللَّكَفِيرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

105. It is never the wish
Of those without Faith
Among the People of the Book,
Nor of the Pagans,
That anything good
Should come down to you
From your Lord.
But God will choose
For His special Mercy
Whom He will—for God is
Lord of grace abounding.

مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ

106. None of Our revelations¹⁰⁷
Do We abrogate
Or cause to be forgotten;
But We substitute

أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ٥
مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ
أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ

106. The word disapproved is *Rāi'nā*, which as used by the Muslims meant "Please look at us, attend to us." But it was ridiculed by enemies by a little twist to suggest some insulting meaning. So an unambiguous word "Unzurnā," with the same meaning is suggested. The general lesson is that we must guard ourselves against the cynical trick of using words which sound complimentary to the ear but have a hidden barb in them. Not only must we be plain and honest in our words. We must respectfully hearken to the words of a Teacher whom we have addressed. Thoughtless people use vain words or put foolish questions, and straightway turn their minds to something else.

107. The word which I have translated by the word "revelations" is *Āyāt*. See C. 41 and n. 15. It is not only used for verses of the *Qur-ān*, but in a general sense for God's revelations, as in ii. 39 and for other Signs of God in history of nature, or miracles, as in ii. 61. It has even been used for human signs and tokens of wonder, as, for example, monuments or landmarks built by the ancient people of 'Ad (xxvi. 128). What is the meaning here? If we take it in a general sense, it means that God's Message from age to age is always the same, but that its form may differ according to the needs and exigencies of the time. That form was different as given to Moses and then to Jesus and then to Muḥammad. Some commentators apply it also to the *Āyāt* of the *Qur-ān*. There is nothing derogatory in this if we believe in progressive revelation. In iii. 7 we are told distinctly about the *Qur-ān*, that some of its verses are basic or fundamental, and others are allegorical, and it is mischievous to treat the allegorical verses and follow them (literally). On the other hand, it is absurd to treat such a verse as ii. 115 as if it were abrogated by ii. 144 about the *Qibla*. We turn to the *Qibla*, but we do not believe that God is only in one place. He is everywhere. See second note to ii. 144.

There may be express abrogation, or there may be "causing or permitting to forget." How many good and wise institutions gradually become obsolete by afflux of time? Then there is the gradual process of disuse or forgetting in evolution. This does not mean that eternal principles change. It is only a sign of God's infinite Power that His creation should take so many forms and shapes not only in the material world but in the world of man's thought and expression.

Something better or similar :
Knowest thou not that God
Hath power over all things ?

107. Knowest thou not
That to God belongeth
The dominion of the heavens
And the earth ?
And besides Him ye have
Neither patron nor helper.

108. ~~W~~ould ye question
Your Apostle as Moses¹⁰⁸
Was questioned of old ?
But whoever changeth
From Faith to Unbelief,
Hath strayed without doubt
From the even way.¹⁰⁹

109. Quite a number of the People
Of the Book wish they could
Turn you (people) back
To infidelity after ye have
believed,
From selfish envy,
After the Truth hath become
Manifest unto them :
But forgive and overlook,¹¹⁰
Till God accomplish
His purpose ;¹¹¹ for God¹¹²
Hath power over all things.

يَحْيِي مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا
أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

١٠٧- أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ
وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

١٠٨- أَمْ تَرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ
كَمَا سَأَلَ مُوسَى مِنْ قَبْلُ
وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ

١٠٩- وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
لَوْ يَرُّوْكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَقَارًا
حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا
تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ

فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

108. Moses was constantly harassed with foolish, impertinent, or disingenuous questions by his own people. We must not follow that bad example. In spiritual matters, posers do no good : questions should be asked only for real instruction.

109. " Even way " : the Arabic word *sawā* signifies smoothness as opposed to roughness ; symmetry as opposed to want of plan ; equality or proportion as opposed to want of design ; rectitude as opposed to crookedness ; a mean as opposed to extremes ; and fitness for the object held in view as opposed to faultiness.

110. Three words are used in the Qur-ān, with a meaning akin to " forgive ", but each with a different shade of meaning. ' *Afā* (here translated " forgive ") means to forget, to obliterate from one's mind. ' *Safaha* (here translated " overlook ") means to turn away from, to ignore, to treat a matter as if it did not affect one. ' *Gafara* (which does not occur in this verse) means to cover up something, as God does to our sins with His grace : this word is particularly appropriate in God's attribute of *Gaffār*, the One who forgives again and again.

111. The word *Amr* is comprehensive, and includes (1) an order or command as in xcvi. 12 : or (2) a purpose, design, will, as in xviii. 82 ; or (3) affairs, working, doing, carrying out or execution of a design, as in lxxxix. 5. In many cases some of these meanings run together.

112. Note how this phrase, seemingly repeated from ii. 106 and occurring in many other places, has an appropriate signification in each place. In ii. 106 we were told about progressive revelation, how the same thing may take different forms, and seeming human infirmity contribute to the fulfilment of God's design, for God's power is unlimited. Here we are told to be patient and forgiving against envy and injustice ; this too may be fulfilling God's purpose, for His power is infinite.

110. And be steadfast in prayer
And regular in charity :
And whatever good
Ye send forth for your souls¹¹³
Before you, ye shall find it
With God : for God sees
Well all that ye do.

111. And they say : " None
Shall enter Paradise unless
He be a Jew or a Christian."
Those are their (vain) desires.
Say : " Produce your proof
If ye are truthful."

112. Nay,—whoever submits
His whole self¹¹⁴ to God
And is a doer of good,—
He will get his reward
With his Lord ;
On such shall be no fear,
Nor shall they grieve.¹¹⁵

SECTION 14.

113. The Jews say : " The Christians
Have naught (to stand) upon ;
And the Christians say :
" The Jews have naught
(To stand) upon." Yet they
(Profess to) study the (same) Book
Like unto their word
Is what those say who know
not ;¹¹⁶

۱۱۰- وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

۱۱۱- وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ
كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصْرِيًّا تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ
هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

۱۱۲- بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ
وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

۱۱۳- وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصْرِيَّةُ عَلَى
شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرِيَّةُ لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ
عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ
كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ

113. Cf. ii. 95 n.

114. The word translated " self " is *Wajh*, a comprehensive Arabic word. It means (1) literally " face " : but it may imply (2) countenance or favour, as in xcii. 20 ; (3) honour, glory, Presence as applied to God, as in ii. 115, and perhaps also in lv. 27 ; (4) cause, sake (" for the sake of ") as in lxxvi. 8 ; (5) the first part, the beginning, as in iii. 71 ; (6) nature, inner being, essence, self, as in v. 111, xxviii. 88, and perhaps also in lv. 27. Here I understand meaning 6 ; the face expresses the personality or the whole inner self of man.

115. This phrase comes in aptly in its own context many times. In this Sūra it occurs in ii. 38, 62, 112, 262, 274, and 277. It serves the same purpose as a refrain in a very well-arranged Song, or a *motif* in Wagner's powerful music.

116. It is a sure sign of ignorance and prejudice when you study the same Book as another or a similar one and yet are absolutely intolerant of the meaning which the other draws from it. You should know better, but you speak like the ignorant. In this case the primary reference in the word " ignorant " may be to the Pagan Arabs,

But God will judge
Between them in their quarrel
On the Day of Judgment.

114. And who is more unjust
Than he who forbids¹¹⁷
That in places for the worship
Of God, God's name should be
Celebrated?—whose zeal
Is (in fact) to ruin them?
It was not fitting that such
Should themselves enter them
Except in fear. For them
There is nothing but disgrace
In this world, and in the world
To come, an exceeding torment.

115. To God belong the East
And the West : whithersoever
Ye turn, there is the Presence¹¹⁸
Of God. For God is
All-Pervading.
All-Knowing.

116. They say : " God hath begotten
A son " : Glory be to Him.—Nay,
To Him belongs all
That is in the heavens
And on earth : everything
Renders worship to Him.¹¹⁹

117. To Him is due
The primal origin

فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا
فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ○

١١٤- وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ
أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا
أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا
خَافِينَ هُ
لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ○

١١٥- وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ
فَإِنَّمَا تُثَلَّثُونَ فَتَوَجَّهْ لِّلَّهِ
إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَأَسِعَ عَلَيْهِ ○

١١٦- وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا
سُبْحَنَهُ بَلْ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
كُلٌّ لَّهُ فَاَتُوتُونَ ○

١١٧- بَدِيعُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

117. There were actually Pagans in Mecca who tried to shut out the Muslim Arabs from the Ka'ba, the universal place of Arab worship. The Pagans themselves called it the House of God. With what face could they exclude the Muslims, who wanted to worship the true God instead of worshipping idols? If these Pagans had succeeded, they would only have caused violent divisions among the Arabs and destroyed the sanctity and the very existence of the Ka'ba.

This verse, taken in a general sense, establishes the principle of freedom of worship in a public mosque or place dedicated to the worship of God. This is recognized in Muslim law. There may be differences of opinion between one individual and another, or between one group and another as to the nature of God or the proper mode of worship, but no tests can be laid down, nor can one individual or sect exclude another. So long as a person enters reverently and does nothing outwardly to cause offence to the other worshippers, he has a right to go and worship in a public place set apart for God's worship.

118. The word translated " Presence " is *Wajh*, literally " face." See note to ii. 112 above.

119. It is a derogation from the glory of God—in fact it is blasphemy—to say that God begets sons, like a man or an animal. The Christian doctrine is here emphatically repudiated. If words have any meaning, it would mean an attribution to God of a material nature, and of the lower animal functions of sex. In a spiritual sense, we are all children of God. And all Creation celebrates His glory. Verse 117 should be read with this to complete the argument.

Of the heavens and the earth :¹²⁰
When He decreeth a matter,
He saith to it : " Be,"
And it is.

وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ
فَيَكُونُ ○

118. Say those without knowledge :
" Why speaketh not God
Unto us ? Or why cometh not
Unto us a Sign ?"
So said the people before them,
Words of similar import.
Their hearts are alike.
We have indeed made clear
The Signs unto any people
Who hold firmly
To Faith (in their hearts).

١١٨- وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا
يُكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا آيَةٌ
كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِثْلَ
قَوْلِهِمْ
تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ
قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ○

119. Verily We have sent thee
In truth as a bearer
Of glad tidings and a warner :
But of thee no question
Shall be asked of the Companions
Of the Blazing Fire.

١١٩- إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا
وَنَذِيرًا
وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنِ أَصْحَابِ الْجَحِيمِ ○

120. Never will the Jews
Or the Christians be satisfied
With thee unless thou follow
Their form of religion. Say :

١٢٠- وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ
حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ قُلْ

120. The previous verse told us that everything in heaven and earth celebrates the glory of God. Lest anyone should think that the heavens and the earth were themselves primeval and eternal, we are now told that they themselves are creatures of God's will and design. Cf. vi. 102, where the word *bada'a* is used as here for the creation of the heavens and the earth, and *khalafa* is used for the creation of all things. *Bada'a* goes back to the very primal beginning, as far as we can conceive it. The materialists might say that primeval matter was eternal : other things, i.e., the forms and shapes as we see them now, were called into being at some time or other, and will perish. When they perish, they dissolve into primeval matter again, which stands as the base of all existence. We go further back. We say that if we postulate such primeval matter, it owes its origin itself to God, Who is the final basis of existence, the Cause of all Causes. If this is conceded, we proceed to argue that the process of Creation is not then completed. "All things in the heavens and on the earth" are created by gradual processes. In "things" we include abstract as well as material things. We see the abstract things and ideas actually growing before us. But that also is God's creation, to which we can apply the word *khalafa*, for in it is involved the idea of measuring, fitting it into a scheme of other things. Cf. liv. 49 ; also xxv. 59. Here comes in what we know as the process of evolution. On the other hand, the "amr" (= Command. Direction. Design) is a single thing, unrelated to Time, "like the twinkling of an eye" (liv. 50). Another word to note in this connection is *ja'ala*, "making" which seems to imply new shapes and forms, new dispositions, as the making of the Signs of the Zodiac in the heavens, or the setting out of the sun and moon for light, or the establishment of the succession of day and night (xxv. 61-62). A further process with regard to the soul is described in the word *sawwā*, bringing it to perfection (xci. 7) but this we shall discuss in its place. *Fajara* (xiii. 11) implies, like *bada'a*, the creating of a thing out of nothing and after no pre-existing similitude, but perhaps *fajara* implies the creation of primeval matter to which further processes have to be applied later, as when one prepares dough but leaves the leavening to be done after. *Badaa* (without the 'ain), xxx. 27, implies beginning the process of creation : this is made further clear in xxxii. 7, where the beginning of the creation of pristine man from clay refers to his physical body, leaving the further processes of reproduction and the breathing in of the soul to be described in subsequent verses. Lastly, *baraa* is creation implying liberation from pre-existing matter or circumstance, e.g., man's body from clay (lix. 24) or a calamity from previously existing circumstances (lvii. 22). See also vi. 94, n. 916 ; vi. 98, n. 923 ; lix. 24, nn. 5405-6.

"The Guidance of God,—that
Is the (only) Guidance."
Wert thou to follow their desires
After the knowledge
Which hath reached thee,
Then wouldst thou find
Neither Protector nor Helper
Against God.

إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَى
وَلَكِنْ أَتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي
جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ
مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ١٢١

121. Those to whom We have sent
The Book study it as it
Should be studied : they are
The ones that believe therein :
Those who reject faith therein,—
The loss is their own.

الَّذِينَ اتَّيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ
تِلَاوَتِهِ ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ
يَكْفُرْ بِهِ ۖ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ١٢١

C. 48.—If the People of the Book rely
(ii. 122-141.) Upon Abraham, let them study
His history. His posterity included
Both Israel and Ismā'il. Abraham
Was a righteous man of God,
A Muslim, and so were his children.
Abraham and Ismā'il built
The Ka'ba as the House of God,
And purified it, to be a centre
Of worship for all the world :
For God is the God of all Peoples.¹²¹

SECTION 15.

122. ② Children of Israel ! call to
mind
The special favour which I
bestowed
Upon you, and that I preferred you
To all others (for My Mes-age).

يٰٓبَنِي إِسْرَآءِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي
أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ١٢٢

123. Then guard yourselves against
a Day

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا

121. The argument now proceeds on another line. Ye People of the Book who go back to Abraham ! not only is your claim to exclusive knowledge of God false and derogatory to the Lord of All the Worlds, if you must appeal to Abraham, he was also the progenitor of the Arab race through Ismā'il. Indeed Abraham and Ismā'il together built the House of God in Mecca (long before the Temple of Jerusalem was built). They purified it and laid the foundations of the universal religion, which is summed up in the word Islam, or complete submission to the Will of God. Abraham and Ismā'il were thus true Muslims. Whence then your rancour against Islam ?

Historically the Temple at Mecca must have been a far more ancient place of worship than the Temple at Jerusalem. Arab tradition connects various places in and around Mecca with the name of Abraham and identifies the well of Zam-zam with the well in the story of the child Ismā'il. Arab tradition also refers the story of the Sacrifice to Ismā'il and not to Issac, therein differing from the Jewish tradition in Gen. xxii. 1-19.

When one soul shall not avail
another,
Nor shall compensation be
accepted from her
Nor shall intercession profit her
Nor shall anyone be helped
(from outside).¹²²

لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا
وَلَا يَقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ
وَلَا تَنْفَعُهَا شَفَاعَةٌ
وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ○

124. And remember that Abraham
Was tried by his Lord
With certain Commands,¹²³
Which he fulfilled:
He said: "I will make thee
An Imām¹²⁴ to the Nations."
He pleaded: "And aslo
(Imāms) from my offspring!"
He answered: "But My Promise
Is not within the reach
Of evil-doers."

١٢٣- وَإِذْ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ
بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَاتَمَمَنَّ
قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ
لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا
قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي
قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ ○

125. Remember We made the House¹²⁵
A place of Assembly for men
And a place of safety;
And take ye the Station
Of Abraham as a place
Of prayer; and We covenanted
With Abraham and Ismā'il,
That they should sanctify
My House for those who
Compass it round, or use it

١٢٥- وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ
وَآمَنًا
وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى
وَعَهْدًا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ
إِن طَهَّرَا بَيْتِي

122. Verses 122-23 repeat verses 47-48 (except for a slight verbal variation in ii. 123, which does not affect the sense). The argument about the favours to Israel is thus beautifully rounded off, and we now proceed to the argument in favour of the Arabs as succeeding to the spiritual inheritance of Abraham.

123. *Kalimāt*: literally "words": here used in the mystic sense of God's Will or Decree or Purpose. This verse may be taken to be the sum of the verses following. In everything Abraham fulfilled God's wish: he purified God's House; he built the sacred refuge of the Ka'ba; he submitted his will to God's, and thus became the type of Islam. He was promised the leadership of the world; he pleaded for his progeny, and his prayer was granted, with the limitation that if his progeny was false to God, God's promise did not reach the people who proved themselves false.

124. *Imām*: the primary sense is that of being foremost: hence it may mean: (1) leader in religion; (2) leader in congregational prayer; (3) model, pattern, example; (4) a book of guidance and instruction (xi. 17); (5) a book of evidence or record (xxxvi. 12). Here, meanings 1 and 3 are implied. In ix. 12 the word is applied to leaders of Unbelief or Blasphemy.

125. The Ka'ba, the House of God. Its foundation goes back by Arab tradition to Abraham. Its fourfold character is here referred to. (1) It was the centre to which all the Arab tribes resorted for trade, for poetic contests, and for worship. (2) It was sacred territory, and was respected by friend and foe alike. At certain seasons, all fighting was and is forbidden within its limits, and even arms are not allowed to be carried, and no game or other thing is allowed to be killed. Like the Cities of Refuge under the Mosaic Dispensation, to which manslayers could flee (Num. xxxv. 6), or the Sanctuaries in Mediaeval Europe, to which criminals could not be pursued, Mecca was recognized by Arab custom as inviolable for the pursuit of revenge or violence. (3) It was a place of prayer: even to-day there is a Station of Abraham within the enclosure, where Abraham was supposed to have prayed. (4) It must be held pure and sacred for all purposes.

Though the verse as a whole is expressed in the First Person Plural, the House is called "My House," to emphasize the personal relation of the one True God to it, and repudiate the Polytheism which defiled it before it was purified again by Muḥammad.

As a retreat, or bow, or
Prostrate themselves (therein)¹²⁶
In prayer).

126. And remember Abraham said :
" My Lord, make this a City
Of Peace,¹²⁷ and feed its People
With fruits,¹²⁸—such of them
As believe in God and the Last
Day."
He said : " (Yea). and such as
Reject Faith,— for a while
Will I grant them their pleasure,
But will soon drive them
To the torment of Fire,—
An evil destination (indeed) ! "

127. And remember Abraham
And Ismā'il raised
The foundations of the House
(With this prayer) : " Our Lord !
Accept (this service) from us :
For Thou art the All-Hearing,
The All-Knowing.

128. " Our Lord ! make of us
Muslims, bowing to Thy (Will),
And of our progeny a people
Muslim, bowing to Thy (Will) ;
And show us our places for
The celebration of (due) rites ;
And turn unto us (in Mercy) ;
For Thou art the Oft-Returning,
Most Merciful.

129. " Our Lord ! send amongst them
An Apostle of their own,
Who shall rehearse Thy Signs
To them and instruct them

لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ
السُّجُودِ ○

١٢٦- وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا
أَمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ
مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا
ثُمَّ أَصْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ
وَيُشْسِ الْمَصِيرُ ○

١٢٧- وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ
الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ
رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

١٢٨- رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ
وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَكَ
وَآرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ○

١٢٩- رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ
يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ

¹²⁶ Four rites are here enumerated, which have now acquired a technical meaning. (1) Compassing the sacred territory, or going round the Ka'ba : *Tawāf*. There are special guides who take pilgrims and visitors round. (2) Retiring to the place as a spiritual retreat, for contemplation and prayer : *I'tikāf*. (3) The posture of bending the back in prayer : *Rukū'*. (4) The posture of prostrating oneself on the ground in prayer : *Sujūd*. The protection of the holy territory is for all, but special cleanliness and purity is required for the sake of the devotees who undertake these rites.

¹²⁷ The root *salama* in the word *Islam* implies (among other ideas) the idea of Peace, and therefore when Mecca is the city of Islam, it is also the City of Peace. The same root occurs in the latter part of the name Jerusalem, the Jewish City of Peace. When the day of Jerusalem passed (see verse 134 or 141 below), Mecca became the "New Jerusalem"—or rather the old and original "City of Peace" restored and made universal.

¹²⁸ The territory of Mecca is barren and rocky, compared with, say, Taif, a city 70-75 miles east of Mecca. A prayer for the prosperity of Mecca therefore includes a prayer for the good things of material life. This is the literal meaning. But note that the opposition in this verse is between the fruits of the Garden for the righteous and the torments of the Fire for the evil ones—a spiritual allegory of great force and aptness.

In Scripture and Wisdom,
And sanctify them :
For Thou art the Exalted in Might,
The Wise.” 129

وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

SECTION 16.

130. And who turns away
From the religion of Abraham
But such as debase their souls
With folly ? Him We chose 130
And rendered pure in this world :
And he will be in the Hereafter
In the ranks of the Righteous.

۝۱۳۰- وَمَنْ يَرْتَعِْبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ وَلَقَدْ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ
الصَّالِحِينَ ۝

131. Behold ! his Lord said
To him : “ Bow (thy will to Me) : ”
He said : “ I bow (my will)
To the Lord and Cherisher
Of the Universe.”

۝۱۳۱- إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ
أَسْلِمْ

قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

132. And this was the legacy
That Abraham left to his sons,
And so did Jacob ;
“ Oh my sons ! God hath chosen
The Faith for you ; then die not
Except in the Faith of Islam.”

۝۱۳۲- وَوَضِيَ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ
يَبْنِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى لَكُمُ الدِّينَ
فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

133. Were ye witnesses 131
When Death appeared before
Jacob ?
Behold, he said to his sons :
“ What will ye worship after me ? ”
They said : “ We shall worship

۝۱۳۳- أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ
النُّوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ
مِنْ بَعْدِي ۖ قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَ

129 How beautiful this prayer is, and how aptly it comes in here in the argument ! Such Paganism or star-worship or planet-worship as there was in Abraham's time was first cleared out of Mecca by Abraham. This is the chief meaning of “sanctification” or purification in ii. 125, although of course physical cleanliness is (in physical condition) a necessary element of purification in the higher sense. Abraham and his elder son Ismā'il then built the Ka'ba and established the rites and usages of the sacred city. He was thus the founder of the original Islam (which is as old as mankind) in Arabia. As becomes a devout man, he offers and dedicates the work to God in humble supplication addressing Him as the All-Hearing and the All-Knowing. He then asks for a blessing on himself and his progeny generally, both the children of his eldest-born Ismā'il and his younger son Isaac. With prophetic vision he foresees that there will be corruption and backsliding in both branches of his family : Mecca will house 360 idols, and Jerusalem will become a harlot city (Ezekiel xvi. 15), a city of abomination. But the light of Islam will shine, and reclaim the lost people in both branches and indeed in all the world. So he prays for God's mercy, addressing Him as the Oft-Returning, Most Merciful. And finally he foresees in Mecca an Apostle teaching the people as one “of their own,” and in their own beautiful Arabic language : he asks for a blessing on Muhammad's ministry, appealing to the Power and Wisdom of God.

130. *Istafa* : chose ; chose because of purity ; chose and purified. It is the same root from which *Mustafā* is derived, one of the titles of Muhammad.

131. The whole of the Children of Israel are called to witness one of their slogans, that they worshipped “the God of their fathers.” The idea in their minds got narrowed down to that of a tribal God. But they are reminded that their ancestors had the principle of Islam in them,—the worship of the One True and Universal God. The death-bed scene is described in Jewish tradition.

Thy God and the God of thy
fathers,¹³²—
Of Abraham, Ismā'il, and Isaac,—
The One (True) God :
To Him we bow (in Islam)."

134. That was a People that hath
Passed away. They shall reap
The fruit of what they did,
And ye of what ye do !
Of their merits
There is no question in your case!¹³³

135. They say : " Become Jews
Or Christians if ye would be guided
(To salvation)." Say thou :
" Nay ! (I would rather) the
Religion
Of Abraham the True,¹³⁴
And he joined not gods with God."

136. Say ye : " We believe
In God, and the revelation
Given to us, and to Abraham,
Ismā'il, Isaac, Jacob,
And the Tribes, and that given
To Moses and Jesus, and that given
To (all) Prophets from their Lord :
We make no difference
Between one and another of them:
And we bow to God (in Islam)."¹³⁵

137. So if they believe
As ye believe, they are indeed
On the right path ; but if
They turn back, it is they

إِلَهُ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ
إِلَهًُا وَاحِدًا ۝

وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

١٣٣- تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۖ لَهَا مَا
كَسَبَتْ وَلكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَسْأَلُونَهُ
عَنَّا كَالَّذِينَ يَغْمَلُونَ ۝

١٣٥- وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى
تَهْتَدُوا ۚ قُلْ

بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ
وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

١٣٦- قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا
أُنْزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَ
يَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَ
عِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ
بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

١٣٧- فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ
 فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا ۖ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا

132. "Fathers" means ancestors, and includes uncles, grand-uncles, as well as direct ascendants.
133. I have made a free paraphrase of what would read literally : "Ye shall not be asked about what they used to do." On the Day of Judgment each soul would have to answer for its own deeds : it cannot claim merit from others, nor be answerable for the crimes or sins of others. Here the argument is : if the Jews or Christians claim the merits of Father Abraham and the Patriarchs or of Jesus, we cannot follow them. Because there were righteous men in the past, it cannot help us unless we are ourselves righteous. The doctrine of personal responsibility is a cardinal feature of Islam.

134. *Hanif* : inclined to right opinion, orthodox (in the literal meaning of the Greek words), firm in faith, sound and well-balanced, true. Perhaps the last word, True, sums up most of the other shades. The Jews, though taught Unity, went after false gods, and the Christians invented the Trinity or borrowed it from Paganism. We go back to the pure, *hanif* doctrine of Abraham, to live and die in faith in the One True God.

135. Here we have the Creed of Islam : to believe in (1) the One Universal God, (2) the Message to us through Muḥammad and the Signs (*āyāt*) as interpreted on the basis of personal responsibility, (3) the Message delivered by other Teachers in the past. These are mentioned in three groups : (1) Abraham, Ismā'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes : of these Abraham had apparently a Book (lxxxvii. 19) and the others followed his tradition ; (2) Moses and Jesus, who each left a scripture : these scriptures are still extant, though not in their pristine form ; and (3) other scriptures, Prophets, or Messengers of God, not specifically mentioned in the Qur-ān (xl. 78). We make no difference between any of these. Their Message (in essentials) was one, and that is the basis of Islam.

Who are in schism ; but God will
Suffice thee as against them,¹³⁶
And He is the All-Hearing,
The All-Knowing.

138. (Our religion is)
The Baptism of God : ¹³⁷
And who can baptize better
Than God ? And it is He
Whom we worship.

139. Say : Will ye dispute
With us about God, seeing
That He is our Lord
And your Lord ; that we
Are responsible for our doings
And ye for yours ; and that
We are sincere (in our faith)
In Him ?

140. Or ¹³⁸ do ye say that
Abraham, Ismā'il, Isaac,
Jacob and the Tribes were
Jews or Christians ?
Says : Do ye know better
Than God ? Ah ! who
Is more unjust than those
Who conceal the testimony
They have from God ?
But God is not unmindful
Of what ye do !

141. That was a people that hath
Passed away. They shall reap
The fruit of what they did,
And ye of what ye do !

¹ Of their merits

³⁰ There is no question in your case : ¹³⁹

هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ ۖ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝

١٣٨- صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ
صِبْغَةً ۖ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عِبْدُونَ ۝

١٣٩- قُلْ أَتَحَاجُّونَنَا فِي اللَّهِ
وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ
وَلَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۖ
وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ ۝

١٤٠- أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ
وِإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطَ كَانُوا يَهُودًا
أَوْ نَصَارَى ۚ قُلْ ءَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمِ اللَّهُ ۚ
وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ
مِنَ اللَّهِ ۚ

وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

١٤١- تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ
لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ
وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

136. We are thus in the true line of those who follow the one and indivisible Message of the One God, wherever delivered. If others narrow it or corrupt it, it is they who have left the faith and created a division or schism. But God sees and knows all. And He will protect His own, and His support will be indefinitely more precious than the support which men can give.

137. *Ṣibgat*: baptism: the root-meaning implies a dye or colour; apparently the Arab Christians mixed a dye or colour in the baptismal water, signifying that the baptized person got a new colour in life. We do not believe that it is necessary to be baptized to be saved. Our higher baptism is the "Baptism" of God by which we take on a colour (symbolically) of God, and absorb His goodness in us.

The accusative case of *Ṣibgat* puts it in opposition to *millat* ("religion") in ii. 135.

138. The alternative is with the question in the last verse. Do you dispute with us although we worship the same God as you and claim that ours is the same religion as that of your ancestors? Or do you really assert that Abraham and his son and his sons' sons, who founded the Tribes long before Moses, followed your Jewish religion as you know it? History of course proves that claim absurd. If the Christians claim that these Patriarchs knew of and followed the teaching of Jesus, the claim is still more absurd,—except in the sense of Islam that God's teaching is one in all ages.

139. Verse 134 began a certain argument, which is now rounded off in the same words in this verse. To use a musical term, the *motif* is now completed. The argument is that it is wrong to claim a monopoly for God's Message: it is the same for all peoples and in all ages: if it undergoes local variations or variations according to times and seasons those variations pass away. This leads to the argument in the remainder of the *Sūrā* that with the renewal of the Message and the birth of a new People, a new symbolism and new ordinances become appropriate, and they are now expounded.

- C. 49.—But those people have passed away,
 (ii. 142-167.) Who promised to uphold the Law of God.
 Their progeny having been found
 Unworthy, their place was taken
 By a new people looking towards Mecca,—
 A new people, with a new Messenger,
 To bear witness to God's Law,
 To proclaim the truth, maintain
 His Symbols, and strive and fight
 For Unity in God's Way.

SECTION 17.

142. The Fools among the people¹⁴⁰
 Will say: "What hath turned
 Them from the Qibla¹⁴¹ to which
 They were used?" Say:
 To God belong both East and
 West:
 He guideth whom He will
 To a Way that is straight.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ
 مَا وَلَّهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا
 قُلْ لِلَّهِ الشَّرْقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ
 يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

143. Thus¹⁴² have We made of you
 An *Ummat* justly balanced,¹⁴³
 That ye might be witnesses¹⁴⁴
 Over the nations,

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا
 لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

140. *Nās*—People, the unthinking multitude that sway to and fro, instead of being firm in God's Way. The reference here is to the idolaters, the Hypocrites, and the party of Jews who were constantly seeking to "entangle in their talk." Muṣṭafa and his disciples in Medina even as the Pharisees and the Sadducees of Jesus's day tried to entangle Jesus (Matt. xxii, 15, 23).

141. *Qibla*—the direction to which Muslims turn in prayer. Islam lays great stress on social prayer in order to emphasise our universal Brotherhood and mutual co-operation. For such prayer, order, punctuality, precision, symbolical postures; and a common direction are essential, so that the Imām (leader) and all his congregation may face one way and offer their supplications to God. In the early days, before they were organised as a people, they followed as a symbol for their Qibla the sacred city of Jerusalem, sacred both to the Jews and the Christians, the People of the Book. This symbolised their allegiance to the continuity of God's revelation. When, despised and persecuted, they were turned out of Mecca and arrived in Medina, Muṣṭafa, under divine direction, began to organise his people as an *Ummat*, an independent people, with laws and rituals of their own. At that stage the Ka'ba was established as a Qibla, thus going back to the earliest centre, with which the name of Abraham was connected, and traditionally also the name of Adam. Jerusalem still remained (and remains) sacred in the eyes of Islam on account of its past, but Islam is a progressive religion, and its new symbolism enabled it to shake off the tradition of a dead past and usher in the era of untrammelled freedom dear to the spirit of Arabia. The change took place about 16½ months after Hijrat.

142. *Thus*: By giving you a Qibla of your own, most ancient in history, and most modern as a symbol of your organisation as a new nation (*Ummat*).

143. *Justly balanced*: The essence of Islam is to avoid all extravagances on either side. It is a sober, practical religion. But the Arabic word (*wasat*) also implies a touch of the literal meaning of Intermediacy. Geographically Arabia is in an intermediate position in the Old World, as was proved in history by the rapid expansion of Islam, north, south, west and east.

144. *Witnesses*: When two persons dispute, they advance extravagant claims. A just witness comes between them, and brings the light of reason to bear on them, pruning all their selfish extravagances. So the mission of Islam is to curb, for instance, the extreme formalism of the Mosaic law and the extreme "other, worldliness" professed by Christianity. The witness must be unselfish, equipped with first-hand knowledge, and ready to intervene in the cause of justice. Such is the position claimed by Islam among rival systems. Similarly, within Islam itself, the position of witness to whom disputants can appeal is held by Muḥammad Muṣṭafa.

And the Apostle a witness
Over yourselves;
And We appointed the Qibla
To which thou wast used,
Only to test those who followed
The Apostle from those
Who would turn on their heels¹⁴⁵
(From the Faith). Indeed it was
(A change) momentous, except
To those guided by God.
And never would God
Make your faith of no effect.¹⁴⁶
For God is to all people
Most surely full of kindness,
Most Merciful.

144. We see the turning
Of thy face (for guidance)
To the heaven: ¹⁴⁷ now
Shall We turn thee
To a Qibla that shall
Please thee. Turn then
Thy face in the direction
Of the Sacred Mosque: ¹⁴⁸
Wherever ye are, turn
Your faces in that direction.

وَيَكُونُ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا
وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا
إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ
مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ
وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى
اللَّهُ
وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرُءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

١٤٣- قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ
فَلَنُؤَلِّيكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا
فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ
وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ

145. The Qibla of Jerusalem might itself have seemed strange to the Arabs, and the change from it to the Ka'ba might have seemed strange after they had become used to the other. In reality one direction or another, or east or west, in itself did not matter, as God is in all places, and is independent of Time and Place. What mattered was the sense of discipline, on which Islam lays so much stress; which of us is willing to follow the directions of the chosen Apostle of God? Mere quibblers about non-essential matters are tested by this.

146. What became of prayer with the Jerusalem Qibla? It was equally efficacious before the new Qibla was ordained. God regards our faith: every act of true and genuine faith is efficacious with Him, even if formalists pick holes in such acts.

147. This shows the sincere desire of Muṣṭafā to seek light from above in the matter of the Qibla. Until the organisation of his own People into a well-knit community, with its distinctive laws and ordinances, he followed a practice based on the fact that the Jews and Christians looked upon Jerusalem as a sacred city. But there was no universal Qibla among them. Some Jews turned towards Jerusalem, especially during the Captivity, as we shall see later. At the time of our Prophet, Jerusalem was in the hands of the Byzantine Empire, which was Christian. But the Christians oriented their churches to the East (hence the word "orientation"), which is a point of the compass, and not the direction of any sacred-place. The fact of the altar being in the East does not mean that every worshipper has his face to the east; for, according at least to modern practice, the seats in a church are so placed that different worshippers may face in different directions. The Preacher of Unity naturally wanted, in this as in other matters, a symbol of complete unity, and his heart was naturally delighted when the Qibla towards the Ka'ba was settled. Its connection with Abraham gave it great antiquity: its character of being an Arab centre made it appropriate when the Message came in Arabic, and was preached through the union of the Arabs; at the time it was adopted, the little Muslim community was shut out of it, being exiles in Medina, but it became a symbol of hope and eventual triumph, of which Muḥammad lived to see the fulfilment; and it also became the centre and gathering ground of all peoples in the universal Pilgrimage, which was instituted with it.

148. *The Sacred Mosque*: The Ka'ba in the sacred city of Mecca. It is not correct to suggest that the command making the Ka'ba the Qibla abrogates ii. 115, where it is stated that East and West belong to God, and He is everywhere. This is perfectly true at all times, before and after the institution of the Qibla. As if to emphasise this, the same words about East and West are repeated in this very passage; see ii. 142 above. Where the *Iqān* mentions *mansūkh* in this connection, I am sorry I cannot follow that opinion, unless *mansūkh* is defined in a special way, as some of the commentators do.

The People of the Book¹⁴⁹
Know well that that is
The Truth from their Lord.
Nor is God unmindful
Of what they do.

الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ

145. Even if thou wert to bring
To the People of the Book
All the Signs (together),
They would not follow
Thy Qibla; nor art thou
Going to follow their Qibla;
Nor indeed will they follow¹⁵⁰
Each other's Qibla. If thou,
After the knowledge hath reached
thee,
Wert to follow their (vain)
Desires,—then wert thou,
Indeed (clearly) in the wrong.

۱۴۵- وَلَئِنْ أَتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَتَّبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ
وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ
وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ
وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ
إِنَّكَ إِذَا لَئِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

146. The People of the Book
Know this as they know.
Their own sons;¹⁵¹ but some
Of them conceal the Truth
Which they themselves know.

۱۴۶- الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعْتَهُمْ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا
يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ
لَيَكْفُرُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

147. The Truth is from thy Lord;¹⁵²
So be not at all in doubt.

۱۴۷- الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُتَرَدِّينَ

149. Glimmerings of such a Qibla were already foreshadowed in Jewish and Christian practice but its universality was only perfected in Islam.

150. See n. 147 to ii. 144 above.

The Jews and Christians had a glimmering of the Qibla idea, but in their attitude of self-sufficiency they were not likely to welcome the Qibla idea as perfected in Islam. Nor is Islam, after the fuller knowledge which it has received, likely to revert to the uncertain, imperfect, and varying ideas of orientation held previously.

A very clear glimpse of the old Jewish practice in the matter of the Qibla and the importance attached to it is found in the Book of Daniel, vi. 10. Daniel was a righteous man of princely lineage and lived about 606-538 B.C. He was carried off to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, the Assyrian, but was still living when Assyria was overthrown by the Medes and Persians. In spite of the "captivity" of the Jews, Daniel enjoyed the highest offices of state at Babylon, but he was ever true to Jerusalem. His enemies (under the Persian monarch) got a penal law passed against any one who "asked a petition of any god or man for 30 days" except the Persian King. But Daniel continued true to Jerusalem. "His windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

151. The People of the Book should have known all this as well as "they knew their own sons", as their past traditions and teaching should have made them receptive of the new Message. Some commentators construe the demonstrative pronoun "this" to refer to the Apostle. In that case the interpretation would be: The People of the Book know Muhammad as well as they know their own sons; they know him to be true and upright; they know him to be in the line of Abraham; they know him to correspond to the description of the Prophet foretold among themselves; but selfishness induces some of them to act against their own knowledge and conceal the truth.

152. Truth only comes from God, and it remains truth, however men might try to conceal it or throw doubts on it.

SECTION 18.

148. **Alto** each is a goal
To which God ¹⁵³ turns him ;
Then strive together (as in a race)
Towards all that is good.
Wheresoever ye are,
God will bring you
Together. For God
Hath power over all things.

149. From whencesoever
Thou startest forth, ¹⁵⁴ turn
Thy face in the direction
Of the Sacred Mosque ;
That is indeed the truth
From thy Lord. And God
Is not unmindful
Of what ye do.

150. So from whencesoever
Thou startest forth, turn
Thy face in the direction
Of the Sacred Mosque ;
And wheresoever ye are,
Turn your face thither :
That there be no ground
Of dispute against you
Among the people,
Except those of them that are
Bent on wickedness ; so fear
Them not, but fear Me ;
And that I may complete
My favours on you, and ye
May (consent to) be guided ;

١٤٨- ذَرِكُلٌ وَجْهَةً هُوَ مُوَلِّيهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا
الْحَيَاتِ
اِنَّ مَا تَكُونُوا يَاتِيَكُمْ بِاللّٰهِ جَمِيعًا
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

١٤٩- وَ مِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ قَوْلٍ
وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
وَلَا تَأْخُذْ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ
وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

١٥٠- وَ مِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ قَوْلٍ
وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ
فَلْيَكُنْ وَجْهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ
لِيَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ
اِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ
فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي
وَلَا تَمْنَعَتْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ۝

153. The question is how we are to construe the pronoun *huwa* in the original. The alternative translation would be: "To each is a goal to which he turns."

The simile of life being a race in which we all zealously run forward to the one goal, *viz.*, the goal of good, may be applied individually and nationally. This supplies another argument of the Ka'ba-Qibla, *viz.*, the unity of goal, with diversity of races, traditions and temperaments.

154. The simile of a race is continued, and so the Qibla command is repeated from that point of view. In ii. 144 it was mentioned as the new symbol of the new nation (Muslim); now it is shown as the symbol of good, at which we should all aim, from whichever point we started, *e.g.*, as Jews or Christians, or our individual point of view; the Qibla will unite us as a symbol of the Goal of the Future. In ii. 150 below, it is repeated: first for the individual, on the ground of uniformity and the removal of all occasions of dispute and argument; and secondly for the Muslim people, on the same ground, as a matter of discipline. There is another little harmony in the matter of the repetitions. Note that the race and starting point argument begins at ii. 149 and is rounded off in the first part of ii. 150; while the national and general argument beginning at ii. 144 is rounded off in the latter part of ii. 150. The latter argument includes the former, and is more widely worded: "whosoever ye are": which in the Arabic expression would imply three things; in whatever circumstances ye are, or at whatever time ye are, or in whatever place ye are. I have spoken before of a sort of musical harmony in verbal repetitions: here there is a sort of pictorial harmony, as of a larger circle symmetrically including a smaller concentric circle.

151. A similar (favour
Have ye already received)¹⁵⁶
In that We have sent
Among you an Apostle
Of your own, rehearsing to you
Our Signs, and sanctifying
You, and instructing you
In Scripture and Wisdom,
And in new Knowledge.

١٥١- كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا
وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
فِيهِ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

152. Then do ye remember¹⁵⁶
Me ; I will remember
You. Be grateful to Me,
And reject not Faith.

١٥٢- فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ
وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُون ۝

SECTION 19.

153. ۞ ye who believe ! seek help
With patient Perseverance¹⁵⁷
And Prayer : for God is with those
Who patiently persevere.

١٥٣- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا
بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝

154. And say not of those
Who are slain in the Way¹⁵⁸

١٥٤- وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَن يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

155. This verse should be read with ii. 150, of which the sentence is here completed. The argument is that in the grant of the Ka'ba Qibla, God was perfecting religion and fulfilling the prayer for the future made by Abraham. That prayer was threefold : (1) That Mecca should be made a sacred Sanctuary (ii. 126) ; (2) that a truly believing (Muslim) nation should be raised, with places of devotion there (ii. 128) ; and (3) that an Apostle should be sent among the Arabs with certain qualities (ii. 129), which are set out there and again repeated here to complete the argument.

156. The word "remember" is too pale a word for *zikr*, which has now acquired a large number of associations in our religious literature, especially Sūfi literature. In its verbal signification it implies : to remember ; to praise by frequently mentioning ; to rehearse ; to celebrate or commemorate ; to make much of ; to cherish the memory of as a precious possession. In Sūfi devotions *zikr* represents both a solemn ritual and a spiritual state of mind or heart, in which the devotee seeks to realise the Presence of God. Thus there is *zikr* of the mind and *zikr* of the heart. For beginners the one may lead to the other ; but in many cases the two may be simultaneous. There is a subtler distinction between the *zikr* that is open and the *zikr* that is secret, corresponding to the two doors of the heart, the fleshly and the spiritual. In English some account (very imperfect) of *zikr* will be found in Hughes's Dictionary of Islam, covering over 14 columns.

From here on to ii. 167 there is a great deal of mystic doctrine. That it is linked with the institution of the Qibla shows that the Qibla is itself connected with a great many root-ideas of the mystical interpretation of Unity.

157. See ii. 45 and n. An additional meaning implied in *ṣabr* is self-restraint. Haqqāni defines it in his *Tafsīr* as following Reason and restraining Fear, Anger, and Desire. What can be a higher reward for patience, perseverance, self-restraint and constancy than that God should be with us ? For this promise opens the door to every kind of spiritual well-being.

158. The "patient perseverance and prayer" mentioned in the last verse is not mere passivity. It is active striving in the way of Truth, which is the way of God. Such striving is the spending of one's self in God's way, either through our property or through our own lives, or the lives of those nearest and dearest to us, or it may be the loss of all the fruits of a lifetime's labour not only in material goods but in some intellectual or moral gain, some position which seemed in our eyes to be eminently desirable in itself, but which we must cheerfully sacrifice if necessary for the Cause. With such sacrifice, our apparent loss may be our real gain : he that loses his life may really gain it ; and the rewards or "fruits" that seem lost were mere impediments on our path to real inward progress.

These extreme sacrifices must be made under the orders and instructions of a righteous Imam, who can see the whole field of spiritual and physical warfare and judge justly of their necessity. Otherwise there is no inherent virtue in mere sacrifice as such or when exercised at the whim of an individual. Courage (the resistance to the test of Fear) and self-denial (the resistance to the test of Hunger or Desire), are also, if they are to be virtues, subject to similar conditions.

Of God: "They are dead."
Nay, they are living,
Though ye perceive (it) not.

155. Be sure We shall test you
With something of fear
And hunger, some loss
In goods or lives or the fruits
(Of your toil). but give
Glad tidings¹⁵⁹ to those
Who patiently persevere,—

156. Who say, when afflicted
With calamity: "To God
We belong, and to Him
Is our return":

157. They are those on whom
(Descend) blessings from God,
And Mercy,
And they are the ones
That receive Guidance.

158. Behold! Šafā and Marwa
Are among the Symbols¹⁶⁰
Of God. So if those who visit
The House¹⁶¹ in the Season
Or at other times,
Should compass them round,
It is no sin in them,
And if any one obeyeth his own

أَمْوَاتٌ

بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

١٥٥- وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ

مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ

وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالْثَمَرِ

وَبَشِيرِ الْظُّبُرِ ۖ

١٥٦- الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ مُّصِيبَةٌ

قَالُوا إِنَّكَ اللَّهُ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۝

١٥٧- أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ

وَرَحْمَةٌ

وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ۝

١٥٨- إِنَّ الشَّافَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ

فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ

فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا

وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا

159. The glad tidings are the blessings of God in ii. 157 or (which is the same thing) the promise in ii. 153 that God will be with them.

160. The virtue of patient perseverance in Faith leads to the mention of two symbolic monuments of that virtue. These are the two little hills of Šafā and Marwa now absorbed in the city of Mecca, and close to the well of Zam-zam. Here, according to tradition, the lady Hājar, mother of the infant Ismā'il, prayed for water in the parched desert, and in her eager quest round these hills, she found her prayer answered and saw the Zam-zam spring. Unfortunately, the Pagan Arabs had placed a male and a female idol here, and their gross and superstitious rites caused offence to the early Muslims. They felt some hesitation in going round these places during the Pilgrimage. As a matter of fact they should have known that the Ka'ba (the House of God) had been itself defiled with idols, and was sanctified again by the purity of Muḥammad's life and teaching. The lesson is that the most sacred things may be turned to the basest uses; that we are not therefore necessarily to ban a thing misused; that if our intentions and life are pure, God will recognise them even if the world cast stones at us because of some evil associations which they join with what we do, or with the people we associate with, or with the places which claim our reverence.

161. The House = the Sacred Mosque, the Ka'ba. The Season of regular Hajj culminates in the visit to 'Arafāt on the ninth day of the month of Zūl-hajj, followed by the circumambulation of the Ka'ba. A visit to the Sacred Mosque and the performance of the rites of pilgrimage at any other time is called an 'Umra. The symbolic rites are the same in either case, except that the 'Arafāt rites are omitted in the 'Umra. The Šafā and Marwa are included among the Monuments, as pointing too ne of the highest of Muslim virtues.

Impulse to Good,—¹⁶²
Be sure that God
Is He Who recogniseth
And knoweth.

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

159. Those who conceal
The clear (Signs) We have
Sent down, and the Guidance
After We have made it
Clear for the People
In the Book,—on them
Shall be God's curse,
And the curse of those
Entitled to curse,—¹⁶³

١٥٩- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ
مَا أَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَى
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ
أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ۝

160. Except those who repent
And make amends
And openly declare (the Truth):
To them I turn;
For I am Oft-returning,
Most Merciful.

١٦٠- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنَّوْا
فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝

161. Those who reject Faith,
And die rejecting,—
On them is God's curse,
And the curse of angels,
And of all mankind ;

١٦١- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا
أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمُ لعْنَةُ اللَّهِ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝

162. They will abide therein :¹⁶⁴
Their penalty will not
Be lightened, nor will
Respite be their (lot).

١٦٢- خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَخَفُّ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ
وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ۝

163. And your God
Is one God :
There is no god
But He,

١٦٣- وَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ

162. The impulse should be to Good: if once we are sure of this, we must obey it without hesitation, whatever people may say.

163. *Those entitled to curse* : i.e., angels and mankind (see ii. 161 below): the cursed ones will deprive themselves of the protection of God and of the angels, who are the Powers of God, and of the good wishes of mankind, because by contumaciously rejecting Faith, they not only sin against God but are false to their own manhood, which God created in the "best of moulds" (Q. xciv. 4). The terrible curses denounced in the Old Testament are set out in Deut. xxviii. 15-68. There is one difference. Here it is for the deliberate rejection of Faith, a theological term for the denying of our higher nature. There it is for a breach of the least part of the ceremonial Law.

164. *Therein*—in the curse. A curse is not a matter of words; it is a terrible spiritual state, opposite to the state of Grace. Can man curse? Not of course in the same sense in which we speak of the curse of God. A mere verbal curse is of no effect. Hence the English saying: "A causeless curse will not come." But if men are oppressed or unjustly treated, their cries can ascend to God in prayer, and then it becomes God's "wrath" or cure, the deprivation of God's Grace as regards the wrong-doer.

Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.¹⁶⁵

SECTION 20.

164. Behold! In the creation
Of the heavens and the earth;
In the alternation
Of the Night and the Day;
In the sailing of the ships
Through the ocean
For the profit of mankind;
In the rain which God
Sends down from the skies,
And the life which He gives
therewith
To an earth that is dead;
In the beasts of all kinds
That He scatters
Through the earth;
In the change of the winds,
And the clouds which they
Trail like their slaves
Between the sky and the earth;—
(Here) indeed are Signs
For a people that are wise.¹⁶⁶

165. Yet there are men
Who take (for worship)
Others besides God,
As equal (with God):

الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ٥

١٦٣- إِنْ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَالْخِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ
وَالْفُلِكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ
بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
مِنْ مَاءٍ
فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا
وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ ٥
وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيحِ وَالسَّحَابِ
الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ
لَا يَتِلَّحِقُ الْقَوْمُ يَعْقِلُونَ ٥

١٦٥- وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا

165. Where the terrible consequences of Evil, i.e., the rejection of God, are mentioned, there is always stress laid on God's attributes of Grace and Mercy. In this case Unity is also stressed, because we have just been told about the Qibla as symbol of unity and are about to pass the theme of unity in diversity, in Nature and in the social laws of human society.

166. This magnificent Nature passage stands out like a hill in a landscape, enhancing the beauty of our view, and preparing us for the everyday laws and ordinances which follow.

Note its literary architecture. God is one: and among His wondrous Signs is the unity of design in the widest diversity of Nature. The Signs are taken from the features of beauty, power, and utility to man himself, and lead up to an appeal to Man's own intelligence and wisdom. We begin with the glory of the heavens and the earth, the wide spaces covered by man's imagination, remote and yet so near to his own life. The most striking everyday phenomenon resulting from the interrelations of the heavens and the earth is the alternation of day and night, regular and yet changing in duration with the Seasons and the latitudes of our globe. The night for rest, and the day for work; and we can think of the work in terms of Nature's beauty: the stately ships "flowing" (as the original text has it) across the seas, for communications and merchandise as between men and men. The seas thus serve us no less than land, and the give-and-take as between sea, sky, and land, is further exemplified by the rain. The rain leads to the fertility of land, and here we are reminded of the contrast between the Winter's death of Nature and her revivification in the Spring. Here we are reminded of agriculture and the use we make of cattle and all kinds of living creatures. The word translated "beasts" has a wide meaning, including crawling creatures, insects, etc.—all contributing to the round of Nature's operations. This leads us on to the wonderful winds, the region of the air, which man is just beginning to explore and navigate. The personified winds drive the clouds in the sky like "slaves". Here is another aspect of clouds besides that of giving rain. The fleecy clouds are things of sunset beauty; at mid-day they temper the glare of the sun; at all times they affect radiation and other processes going on in the sky. So we come back to the sky, rounding off the argument, and correlating our human life with the Will and Power of God, if we had the wisdom to see!

They love them
As they should love God.
But those of Faith are
Overflowing in their love
For God. If only
The unrighteous could see,
Behold, they would see
The Penalty : that to God
Belongs all power, and God
Will strongly enforce
The Penalty.¹⁶⁷

166. Then would those
Who are followed
Clear themselves of those
Who follow (them) :
They would see the Penalty,
And all relations
Between them would be cut off.

167. And those who followed
Would say : "If only
We had one more chance,
We would clear ourselves
Of them, as they have
Cleared themselves of us."
Thus will God show them
(The fruits of) their deeds
As (nothing but) regrets.
Nor will there be a way
For them out of the Fire.¹⁶⁸

يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ
وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ
أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا
وَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ ○

١٦٦- إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ
اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ
وَتَفَقَّطَتْ بِهِمُ الرَّسَابِ ○

١٦٧- وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا
لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةٌ فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّأُوا
مِنَّا
كَذَلِكَ يُرِيدُهُمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ
عَلَيْهِمْ
وَمَا هُمْ بِمُخْرِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ

C. 50.—The Society thus organised

- (ii. 168-242.) Must live under laws
That would guide their everyday life,—
Based on eternal principles
Of righteousness and fair dealing.

167. Everything around and within us points to unity of purpose and design,—points to God. Yet there are foolish persons (unrighteous—those who deliberately use the choice given them to go wrong). They think something else is equal to God. Perhaps they even do lip service to God, but their heart is in their fetish,—unlike the heart of the righteous, who are wholly devoted and absorbed in the love of God. If only the unrighteous could see the consequences, they would see the terrible Penalty, and that all Power is in God's hands, not in that of any one else. Who are these others who are used as fetishes by the misguided? It may be: (1) creatures of their own imagination, or of their faculties misused; the idea lying behind Idols is akin to this, for no intelligent idol-worshipper owns to worshipping stocks and stones; or (2) good leaders whose names have been misused out of perversity to erect them to a position of equality with God; or (3) Powers of evil that deliberately mislead. When it comes to the inevitable consequences of blasphemy and the rejection of God, the eyes of all are opened and these false and artificial relations dissolve. The idea which was created into a fetish disowns its follower, i.e., is seen to have no reasonable basis in the life of the follower, and the follower is forced to renounce it as false. The good leaders whose names were misused would of course disown the misuse of their names, and the evil ones would take an unholy delight in exposing the facts. The Reality is now irresistible, but alas! at what cost?

168. Our deeds are irrevocable and we must pass through the Fire of repentance and regrets.

Cleanliness and sobriety,
 Honesty and helpfulness,
 One to another,—yet shaped
 Into concrete forms, to suit
 Times and circumstances,
 And the varying needs
 Of average men and women :
 The food to be clean and wholesome ;
 Blood-feuds to be abolished ;
 The rights and duties of heirs
 To be recognised after death,
 Not in a spirit of Formalism,
 But to help the weak and the needy
 And check all selfish wrong-doing ;
 Self-denial to be learnt by Fasting ;
 The courage to fight in defence
 Of right, to be defined ;
 The Pilgrimage to be sanctified
 As a symbol of unity ;
 Charity and help to the poor
 To be organised ; unseemly riot
 And drink and gambling
 To be banished ; orphans to be protected ;
 Marriage, divorce, and widowhood
 To be regulated ; and the rights of women,
 Apt to be trampled underfoot,
 Now clearly affirmed.

SECTION 21.

168. ② ye people !
 Eat of what is on earth,
 Lawful and good ; ¹⁶⁹
 And do not follow
 The footsteps of the Evil One,
 For he is to you
 An avowed enemy.

١٦٨-يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ
 حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ
 إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ۝

169. We now come to the regulations about food. First (ii. 168-71), we have an appeal to all people, Muslims, Pagans, as well as the People of the Book ; then (ii. 171-73), to the Muslims specially ; then (ii. 174-76) to the sort of men who then (as some do now) either believe in too much formalism or believe in no restrictions at all. Islam follows the Golden Mean. All well-regulated societies lay down reasonable limitations. These become incumbent on all loyal members of any given society, and show what is "lawful" in that society. But if the limitations are reasonable, as they should be, the "lawful" will also coincide more and more with what is "good".

Good : *Taiyib*=Pure, clean, wholesome, nourishing, pleasing to the taste.

The general principle then would be : what is lawful and what is good, should be followed, not what is evil, or shameful, or foisted on by false ascription to divine injunctions, or what rests merely on the usage of ancestors, even though the ancestors were ignorant or foolish. An example of a shameful custom would be that among the Pagan Arabs of taking congealed blood and eating it fried.

169. For he commands you
What is evil
And shameful,
And that ye should say
Of God that of which
Ye have no knowledge.

١٦٩- إِنْ شَاءَ يَأْمُرْكُمْ
بِالسُّوِّ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ
وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

170. When it is said to them :
"Follow what God hath revealed:"
They say : "Nay ! we shall follow
The ways of our fathers."
What ! even though their fathers
Were void of wisdom and
guidance !

١٧٠- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا آَلَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءُنَا
أَوْ لَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ
لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ○

171. The parable of those
Who reject Faith is
As if one were to shout
Like a goat-herd, to things
That listen to nothing
But calls and cries :¹⁷⁰
Deaf, dumb, and blind,¹⁷¹
They are void of wisdom.

١٧١- وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي
يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً
صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ○

172. O ye who believe !
Eat of the good things
That We have provided for you,
And be grateful to God,
If it is Him ye worship.¹⁷²

١٧٢- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا
رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ○

173. He hath only forbidden you
Dead meat,¹⁷³ and blood,
And the flesh of swine,
And that on which

١٧٣- إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ
الْمَيْتَةَ وَالْدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخُزْنِ

170. If you reject all faith, the highest wisdom and the most salutary regulations are lost on you. You are like "dumb driven cattle" who can merely hear calls, but cannot distinguish intelligently between shades of meaning or subtle differences of values.

171. Cf. ii. 18, where we are told that the rejectors of faith are "deaf, dumb and blind : they will not return to the path." Here the consequence of their not using their senses is that they have no wisdom. In each context there is just the appropriate deduction.

172. Gratitude for God's gifts is one form of worship.

173. Dead meat : *maytat* : carrion : animal that dies of itself : the original Arabic has a slightly wider meaning given to it in *Fiqh* (Religious Law) : anything that dies of itself and is not expressly killed for food with the *Takbir* duly pronounced on it. But there are exceptions, e.g., fish and locusts are lawful, though they have not been made specially *halal* with the *Takbir*. But even fish or locusts as carrion would be obviously ruled out.

Any other name hath been invoked
Besides that of God.¹⁷⁴
But if one is forced by necessity,
Without wilful disobedience,
Nor transgressing due limits,—
Then is he guiltless.
For God is Oft-forgiving
Most Merciful.

174. Those who conceal
God's revelations in the Book,
And purchase for them
A miserable profit,—
They swallow into themselves¹⁷⁵
Naught but Fire ;
God will not address them
On the Day of Resurrection,
Nor purify them :
Grievous will be
Their Penalty.

175. They are the ones
Who buy Error
In place of Guidance
And Torment in place
Of Forgiveness.
Ah ! what boldness
(They show) for the Fire !

176. (Their doom is) because
God sent down the Book
In truth but those who seek
Causes of dispute in the Book

وَمَا أَهْلَ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ
فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ
فَلَا إثمَ عَلَيْهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

١٧٤- إِنْ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ
مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
لُولَيْكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ
وَلَا يَكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

١٧٥- أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ
بِالْهُدَى
وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ
فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ

١٧٦- ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ

174. For prohibited foods, cf. also Q. v. 4-5; vi. 121, 138-146; etc. The teachers of *Fiqah* (Religious Law) work out the details with great elaboration. My purpose is to present general principles, not technical details. Carrion or dead meat and blood as articles of food would obviously cause disgust to any refined person. So would swine's flesh where the swine live on offal. Where swine are fed artificially on clean food, the objections remain: (1) that they are filthy animals in other respects, and the flesh of filthy animals taken as food affects the eater; (2) that swine's flesh has more fat than muscle-building material; and (3) that it is more liable to disease than other kinds of meat: e.g., trichinosis, characterised by hair-like worms in the muscular tissue. As to food dedicated to idols or false gods, it is obviously unseemly for the Children of Unity to partake of it.

175. "They eat nothing but fire into their bellies" is a literal translation that produces an effect of rude inelegance which is not in the Arabic words. Even in the matter of food and drinks, the mission of Islam is to avoid the extremes of lawlessness on the one hand and extreme formalism on the other. It has laid down a few simple and very reasonable rules. Their infraction causes loss of health or physical powers in any case. But if there is further, a spirit of subjective rebellion or fraud—passing off in the name of religion something which is far from the purpose,—the consequences become also moral and spiritual. Then it becomes a sin against Faith and Spirit. Continuing the physical simile, we actually swallow fire into ourselves. Imagine the torments which we should have if we swallowed fire into our physical body! They would be infinitely worse in our spiritual state, and they would go on to the Day of Resurrection, when we shall be deprived even of the words which the Judge speaks to a reasonable culprit, and we shall certainly not win His Grace and Mercy.

Are in a schism¹⁷⁶
Far (from the purpose).

لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ ۝

SECTION 22.

177. It is not righteousness
That ye turn your faces
Towards East or West ;
But it is righteousness—¹⁷⁷
To believe in God¹⁷⁸
And the Last Day,
And the Angels,
And the Book,
And the Messengers ;
To spend of your substance,¹⁷⁹
Out of love for Him,
For your kin,
For orphans,
For the needy,
For the wayfarer,
For those who ask,
And for the ransom of slaves ;
To be steadfast in prayer,¹⁸⁰
And practise regular charity ;
To fulfil the contracts
Which ye have made ;

۱۷۷- لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ
قَبْلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ
وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ
وَالرَّسُولِ
وَأَتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى
وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ
وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ
وَالْمُؤْتُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا ۝

176. From the more physical regulation we are at once lifted up into the sphere of morals and faith. For the one acts and reacts on the other. If we are constantly carping at wholesome regulations, we shall do nothing but cause division and schisms among the people, and ordered society would tend to break up.

177. As if to emphasise again a warning against deadening formalism, we are given a beautiful description of the righteous and God-fearing man. He should obey salutary regulations, but he should fix his gaze on the love of God and the love of his fellow-men. We are given four heads; (1) our faith should be true and sincere; (2) we must be prepared to show it in deeds of charity to our fellow-men; (3) we must be good citizens, supporting social organisation; and (4) our own individual soul must be firm and unshaken in all circumstances. They are interconnected, and yet can be viewed separately.

178. Faith is not merely a matter of words. We must realise the presence and goodness of God. When we do so, the scales fall from our eyes; all the falsities and fleeting nature of the Present cease to ensnare us, for we see the Last Day as if it were to-day. We also see God's working in His world and in us: His Powers (angels), His Messengers and His Message are no longer remote from us, but come within our experience.

179. Practical deeds of charity are of value when they proceed from love, and from no other motive. In this respect, also, our duties take various forms, which are shown in reasonable gradation: our kith and kin; orphans (including any persons who are without support or help); people who are in real need but who never ask (it is our duty to find them out, and they come before those who ask); the stranger, who is entitled to laws of hospitality: the people who ask and are entitled to ask, i.e., not merely lazy beggars, but those who seek our assistance in some form or another (it is our duty to respond to them); and the slaves (we must do all we can to give or buy their freedom). Slavery has many insidious forms, and all are included.

180. Charity and piety in individual cases do not complete our duties. In prayer and charity we must also look to our organised efforts; where there is a Muslim State, these are made through the State, in facilities for public prayer, and public assistance, and for the maintenance of contracts and fair dealing in all matters.

And to be firm and patient,¹⁸¹
 In pain (or suffering)
 And adversity,
 And throughout
 All periods of panic.
 Such are the people
 Of truth, the God-fearing.

178. ﴿٢٥﴾ ye who believe!
 The law of equality¹⁸²
 Is prescribed to you
 In cases of murder :¹⁸³
 The free for the free,
 The slave for the slave,
 The woman for the woman.
 But if any remission
 Is made by the brother¹⁸⁴
 Of the slain, then grant
 Any reasonable demand,¹⁸⁵
 And compensate him

وَالضَّيِّقِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَآءِ وَحِينَ
 الْبَأْسِ
 أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا
 وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ○
 ١٤٨- يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
 كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ
 الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ
 وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ
 وَالْأُنثَىٰ بِالْأُنثَىٰ
 فَمَنْ عَفَىٰ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ

181. Then come the Muslim virtues of firmness and patience. They are to "preserve the dignity of man, with soul erect" (Burns). Three sets of circumstances are specially mentioned for the exercise of this virtue : (1) bodily pain or suffering, (2) adversities or injuries of all kinds, deserved and undeserved, and (3) periods of public panic, such as war, violence, pestilence, etc.

182. Note first that this verse and the next make it clear that Islam has much mitigated the horrors of the pre-Islamic custom of retaliation. In order to meet the strict claims of justice, equality is prescribed, with a strong recommendation for mercy and forgiveness. To translate *qisās*, therefore, by retaliation is, I think, incorrect. The Latin legal term *Lex Talionis* may come near it, but even that is modified here. In any case it is best to avoid technical terms for things that are very different. "Retaliation" in English has a wider meaning, equivalent almost to returning evil for evil, and would more fitly apply to the blood-feuds of the Days of Ignorance. Islam says: if you *must* take a life for a life, at least there should be some measure of equality in it; the killing of the slave of a tribe should not involve a blood-feud where many free men would be killed; but the law of mercy, where it can be obtained by consent, with reasonable compensation, would be better.

Our law of equality only takes account of three conditions in civil society; free for free, slave for slave, woman for woman. Among free men or women, all are equal; you cannot ask that because a wealthy, or high-born, or influential man is killed, his life is equal to two or three lives among the poor or the lowly. Nor, in cases of murder, can you go into the value or abilities of a slave. A woman is mentioned separately because her position as a mother or an economic worker is different. She does not form a third class, but a division in the other two classes. One life having been lost, do not waste many lives in retaliation; at most, let the Law take one life under strictly prescribed conditions, and shut the door to private vengeance or tribal retaliation. But if the aggrieved party consents (and this condition of consent is laid down to prevent worse evils), forgiveness and brotherly love is better, and the door of Mercy is kept open. In Western law, no felony can be compounded.

183. The jurists have carefully laid down that the law of *qisās* refers to murder only. *Qisās* is not applicable to manslaughter, due to a mistake or an accident. There, there would be no capital punishment.

184. *The brother*: the term is perfectly general; all men are brothers in Islam. In this, and in all questions of inheritance, females have similar rights to males, and therefore the masculine gender imports both sexes. Here we are considering the rights of the heirs in the light of the larger brotherhood. In ii 178-79 we have the rights of the heirs to life (as it were); in ii, 180-82 we proceed to the heirs to property.

185. The demand should be such as can be met by the party concerned, i.e., within his means, and reasonable according to justice and good conscience. For example, a demand could not be made affecting the honour of a woman or a man. The whole penalty can be remitted if the aggrieved party agrees, out of brotherly love. In meeting that demand the culprit or his friends should equally be generous and recognise the good-will of the other side. There should be no subterfuges, no bribes, no unseemly byplay: otherwise the whole intep[er]tion of mercy and peace is lost.

With handsome gratitude,
This is a concession
And a Mercy
From your Lord.
After this whoever
Exceeds the limits
Shall be in grave penalty.

179. In the Law of Equality
There is (saving of) Life
To you, O ye men of
understanding ;
That ye may
Restrain yourselves.

180. It is prescribed,
When death approaches
Any of you, if he leave
Any goods, that he make a bequest
To parents and next of kin,¹⁸⁶
According to reasonable usage ;
This is due
From the God-fearing.

181. If anyone changes the bequest
After hearing it,
The guilt shall be on those
Who make the change.
For God hears and knows
(All things).

182. But if anyone fears
Partiality or wrong-doing¹⁸⁷
On the part of the testator,
And makes peace between

فَاتَّبَاعُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءِ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ
ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ
فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ
فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

١٧٩- وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَوةٌ
يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ٥

١٨٠- كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ
أَن تَرَكَ خَيْرَ الْوَصِيَّةِ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ٥

١٨١- فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ
فَاتِّمَاتِ نَفْسُهُ عَلَىٰ الذِّينِ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥

١٨٢- فَمَنْ خَافَ مِن مُّوْحٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ أَثَمًا
فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ

186. There are rules of course for the disposal of intestate property. But it is a good thing that a dying man or woman should, of his own free-will, think of his parents and his next of kin, not in a spirit of injustice to others, but in a spirit of love and reverence for those who have cherished him. He must, however, do it "according to reasonable usage": the limitations will be seen further on.

187. A verbal will is allowed, but it is expected that the testator will be just to his heirs and not depart from what is considered equitable. For this reason definite shares were laid down for heirs later (see Q. iv. 11. etc.). These define or limit the testamentary power, but do not abrogate it. For example, amongst kin there are persons (e.g., an orphan grandson in the presence of surviving sons) who would not inherit under the intestate scheme, and the testator might like to provide for them. Again, there may be outsiders for whom he may wish to provide, and jurists have held that he has powers of disposition up to one-third of his property. But he must not be partial to one heir at the expense of another, or attempt to defeat lawful creditors. If he tries to do this, those who are witnesses to his oral disposition may interfere in two ways. One way would be to persuade the testator to change his bequest before he dies. The other way would be, after death, to get the interested parties together and ask them to agree to a more equitable arrangement. In such a case they are acting in good faith, and there is no fraud. They are doing nothing wrong. Islam approves of every lawful device for keeping brethren at peace, without litigation and quarrels. Except for this, the changing of the provisions of a Will is a crime, as it is under all Law.

(The parties concerned),
There is no wrong in him :
For God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ٥

SECTION 23.

183. ② ye who believe !
Fasting is prescribed to you
As it was prescribed¹⁸⁸
To those before you,
That ye may (learn)
Self-restraint,—

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ
كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ٥

184. (Fasting) for a fixed¹⁸⁹
Number of days ;
But if any of you is ill,
Or on a journey,¹⁹⁰
The prescribed number
(Should be made up)
From days later,
For those who can do it¹⁹¹
(With hardship), is a ransom,
The feeding of one
That is indigent.
But he that will give
More, of his own free will,—
It is better for him.
And it is better for you
That ye fast,
If ye only knew.

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ
فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا
أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ
فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ
وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ
مِسْكِينٍ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ
وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ٥

188. As it was prescribed: this does not mean that the Muslim fast is like the other fasts previously observed, in the number of days, in the time or manner of the fast, or in other incidents; it only means that the principle of self-denial by fasting is not a new one.

189. This verse should be read with the following verses, 185-88, in order that the incidents of the physical fast may be fully understood with reference to its spiritual meaning.

The Muslim fast is not meant for self-torture. Although it is stricter than other fasts, it also provides alleviations for special circumstances. If it were merely a temporary abstention from food and drink, it would be salutary to many people, who habitually eat and drink to excess. The instincts for food, drink, and sex are strong in the animal nature, and temporary restraint from all these enables the attention to be directed to higher things. This is necessary through prayer, contemplation and acts of charity, not of the showy kind, but by seeking out those really in need. Certain standards are prescribed, but much higher standards are recommended.

190. Illness and journey must not be interpreted in an elastic sense: they must be such as to cause real pain or suffering if the fast were observed. For journeys, a minimum standard of three marches is prescribed by some Commentators; others make it more precise by naming a distance of 16 farsakhs, equivalent to 48 miles. A journey of 8 or 9 miles on foot is more tiring than a similar one by bullock cart. There are various degrees of fatigue in riding a given distance on horseback or by camel or in a comfortable train or by motor car or by steamer, aeroplane, or airship. In my opinion the standard must depend on the means of locomotion and on the relative resources of the traveller. It is better to determine it in each case according to circumstances.

191. Those who can do it with hardship: such as aged people, or persons specially circumstanced. The Sha'fi's would include a woman expecting a child, or one who is nursing a baby, but on this point opinion is not unanimous, some holding that they ought to put in the fasts later, when they can.

185. *Ramadhān* is the (month)
 In which was sent down
 The *Qur-ān*, as a Guide
 To mankind, also clear (Signs)
 For guidance and judgment¹⁹²
 (Between right and wrong).
 So every one of you
 Who is present (at his home)
 During that month
 Should spend it in fasting,
 But if any one is ill,
 Or on a journey,
 The prescribed period
 (Should be made up)
 By days later.
 God intends every facility
 For you ; He does not want
 To put you to difficulties.
 (He wants you) to complete
 The prescribed period,
 And to glorify Him ¹⁹³
 In that He has guided you ;
 And perchance ye shall be
 grateful.

186. When my servants
 Ask thee concerning Me,
 I am indeed
 Close (to them) : I listen
 To the prayer of every
 Suppliant when he calleth on Me :
 Let them also, with a will,
 Listen to My call,
 And believe in Me :
 That they may walk
 In the right way. ¹⁹⁴

187. Permitted to you,
 On the night of the fasts,
 Is the approach to your wives.
 They are your garments

١٨٥- شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ
 هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
 وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ
 فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ
 وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا
 أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ
 فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ
 يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ
 وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ
 وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ
 وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَاكُمْ
 وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ○

١٨٦- وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي
 عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ
 أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ
 إِذَا دَعَانِ
 فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي
 وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ○

١٨٧- أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى
 نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ

192. Judgment (between right and wrong) : *Furqān* = the criterion or standard by which we judge between right and wrong. See ii. 53 n.

193. The regulations are again and again coupled with an insistence on two things : (a) the facilities and concessions given, and (b) the spiritual significance of the fast without which it is like an empty shell without a kernel. If we realise this we shall look upon *Ramadhān*, not as a burden but as a blessing, and shall be duly grateful for the lead given to us in this matter.

194. These verses, 186 and 188, are not foreign to the subject of *Ramadhān*, but emphasise its spiritual aspect. Here we are told of Prayer and the nearness of God, and in 188 we are asked not to "eat up" other people's substance.

And ye are their garments.¹⁹⁵
 God knoweth what ye
 Used to do secretly among
 yourselves ;
 But He turned to you
 And forgave you ;
 So now associate with them,
 And seek what God
 Hath ordained for you,¹⁹⁶
 And eat and drink,
 Until the white thread
 Of dawn appear to you
 Distinct from its black thread ;¹⁹⁷
 Then complete your fast
 Till the night appears ;¹⁹⁸
 But do not associate
 With your wives
 While ye are in retreat¹⁹⁹
 In the mosques. Those are²⁰⁰
 Limits (set by) God :
 Approach not nigh thereto.
 Thus doth God make clear
 His Signs to men : that
 They may learn self-restraint.

188. And do not eat up
 Your property among yourselves
 For vanities, nor use it
 As bait for the judges,
 With intent that ye may
 Eat up wrongfully and knowingly

وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لِّهِنَّ وَعِلْمُ اللَّهِ أَنْتُمْ كُنْتُمْ
 تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ
 فَالْزِنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ
 وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا
 حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ
 الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ
 ثُمَّ أَتُوا الْعِيَامَ إِلَى الْيَلِ
 وَلَا تَبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَلَيَّوْنَ فِي السُّجُودِ
 تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا
 كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ
 لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ○

١٨٨- وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ
 وَتُدْأَلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ
 لِيَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ

195. Men and women are each other's garments: i.e., they are for mutual support, mutual comfort, and mutual protection, fitting into each other as a garment fits the body. A garment also is both for show and concealment. The question of sex is always delicate to handle: here we are told that even in such matters a clear, open, and honest course is better than fraud or self-deception. The sex instinct is classed with eating and drinking, an animal thing to be restrained, but not to be ashamed of. The three things are prohibited during the fast by day, but permitted after the fast is broken at night till the next fast commences.

196. There is difference of opinion as to the exact meaning of this. I would connect this as a parallel clause with the clause "eat and drink" which follows, all three being governed by "until the white thread", etc. That is, all three things must stop when the fast begins again in the early morning. Or it may mean: What is permitted is well enough, but seek the higher things ordained for you.

197. Those in touch with Nature know the beautiful effects of early dawn. First appear thin white indefinable streaks of light in the east; then a dark zone supervenes, followed by a beautiful pinkish white zone clearly defined from the dark. This is the true dawn; after that the fast begins.

198. *Till the night appears*: From the actual practice of the Holy Apostle, this is rightly interpreted to mean: "Till sunset."

199. Retreat to the mosques by night after the fast is broken, is specially recommended towards the end of Ramadan, so that all carnal temptations may be avoided.

200. I construe these limits as applying to the whole of the regulations about fasts.

A little of (other) people's
property. 201

SECTION 24.

189. They ask thee
Concerning the New Moons. 202
Say : They are but signs
To mark fixed periods of time
In (the affairs of) men,
And for Pilgrimage.
It is no virtue if ye enter
Your houses from the back :
It is virtue if ye fear God.
Enter houses
Through the proper doors : 203
And fear God :
That ye may prosper.

190. Fight in the Cause of God
Those who fight you, 204
But do not transgress limits ;
For God loveth not transgressors.

191. And slay them
Wherever ye catch them
And turn them out
From where they have

وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

١٨٩- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ
قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ
وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ
ظُهُورِهَا
وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مِنَ اتَّقَى
وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

١٩٠- وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ
وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ۝

١٩١- وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ
وَآخِرُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ

201. Besides the three primal physical needs of man, which are apt to make him greedy, there is a fourth greed in society, the greed of wealth and property. The purpose of fasts is not completed until this fourth greed is also restrained. Ordinarily honest men are content if they refrain from robbery, theft, or embezzlement. Two more subtle forms of the greed are mentioned here. One is where one uses one's own property for corrupting others—judges or those in authority—so as to obtain some material gain even under the cover and protection of the law. The words translated "other people's property" may also mean "public property". A still more subtle form is where we use our own property or property under our own control—"among yourselves" in the Text—for vain or frivolous uses. Under the Islamic standard this is also greed. Property carries with it its own responsibilities. If we fail to understand or fulfil them, we have not learnt the full lesson of self-denial by fasts.

202. There were many superstitions connected with the New Moon, as there are to the present day. We are told to disregard such superstitions. As a measure of time, where the lunar calendar is used, the New Moon is one great sign, for which people watch with eagerness. Muslim festivals, including the Pilgrimage, are fixed by the appearance of the New Moon. The Arabs, among other superstitions, had one which made them enter their houses by the back door during or after the Pilgrimage. This is disapproved, for there is no virtue in any such artificial restrictions. All virtue proceeds from the love and fear of God.

203. This is a Muslim proverb now, and much might be written about its manifold meanings. A few may be noted here. (1) If you enter a society, respect its manners and customs. (2) If you want to achieve an object honourably, go about it openly and not "by a backdoor". (3) Do not beat about the bush. (4) If you wish success in an undertaking, provide all the necessary instruments for it.

The subject of the New Moon provides a good transition between the Ramadhan fast which begins and ends with the New Moon, the Pilgrimage, whose ten days commence with the New Moon and the Wars which Islam had to wage in self-defence against the Pagans, who wanted to exclude them from the Pilgrimage after they had driven them out of house and home.

204. War is only permissible in self-defence, and under well-defined limits. When undertaken, it must be pushed with vigour, but not relentlessly, but only to restore peace and freedom for the worship of God. In any case strict limits must not be transgressed : women, children, old and infirm men should not be molested, nor trees and crops cut down, nor peace withheld when the enemy comes to terms.

Turned you out ;
 For tumult and oppression
 Are worse than slaughter ;
 But fight them not ²⁰⁵
 At the Sacred Mosque,
 Unless they (first)
 Fight you there :
 But if they fight you,
 Slay them.
 Such is the reward
 Of those who suppress Faith. ²⁰⁶

192. But if they cease,
 God is Oft-forgiving,
 Most Merciful.

193. And fight them on
 Until there is no more
 Tumult or oppression,
 And there prevail
 Justice and faith in God ; ²⁰⁷
 But if they cease, ²⁰⁸
 Let there be no hostility
 Except to those
 Who practise oppression.

وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ
 وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
 حَتَّى يُقَاتِلَكُمْ فِيهِ
 فَإِنْ قَاتَلَكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ
 كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

١٩٢- فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا
 فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

١٩٣- وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ
 وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ
 فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى
 الظَّالِمِينَ ○

205. This passage is illustrated by the events that happened at Hudaibiya in the sixth year of the Hijra, though it is not clear that it was revealed on that occasion. The Muslims were by this time a strong and influential community. Many of them were exiles from Mecca, where the Pagans had established an intolerant autocracy, persecuting Muslims, preventing them from visiting their homes and even keeping them out by force from performing the Pilgrimage during the universally recognised period of truce. This was intolerance, oppression, and autocracy to the last degree, and the mere readiness of the Muslims to enforce their rights as Arab citizens resulted without bloodshed in an agreement which the Muslims faithfully observed. The Pagans, however, had no scruples in breaking faith, and it is unnecessary here to go into subsequent events.

In general, it may be said that Islam is the religion of peace, good-will, mutual understanding, and good faith. But it will not acquiesce in wrong-doing, and its men will hold their lives cheap in defence of honour, justice, and the religion which they hold sacred. Their ideal is that of heroic virtue combined with unselfish gentleness and tenderness, such as is exemplified in the life of the Apostle. They believe in courage, obedience, discipline, duty, and a constant striving by all the means in their power, physical, moral, intellectual, and spiritual, for the establishment of truth and righteousness. They know that war is an evil, but they will not flinch from it if their honour demands it and (a most important condition) a righteous *Imām* (such as Muhammad was *per excellence*) commands it, for then they know they are not serving carnal ends. In other cases, war has nothing to do with their faith, except that it will always be regulated by its humane precepts.

206. *Suppress Faith* : in the narrower as well as the larger sense. If they want forcibly to prevent you from exercising your sacred rites, they have declared war on your religion, and it would be cowardice to ignore the challenge or to fail in rooting out the tyranny.

207. *Justice and Faith*. The Arabic word is *Dīn*, which is comprehensive. It implies the ideas of indebtedness, duty, obedience, judgment, justice, faith, religion, customary rites, etc. The clause means : "until there is *Dīn* for God."

208. If the opposite party cease to persecute you, your hostility ends with them as a party, but it does not mean that you become friends to oppression. Your fight is against wrong ; there should be no rancour against men.

194. The prohibited month²⁰⁹

For the prohibited month,—
And so for all things prohibited,—
There is the law of equality.
If then any one transgresses
The prohibition against you,
Transgress ye likewise
Against him.
But fear God, and know²¹⁰
That God is with those
Who restrain themselves.

١٩٤- الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ
وَالْحُرْمَتِ قِصَاصٌ
فَمَنِ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ
فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى
عَلَيْكُمْ

195. And spend of your substance
In the Cause of God,
And make not your own hands
Contribute to (your destruction);²¹¹
But do good;
For God loveth those
Who do good.

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ○
١٩٥- وَانْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا
بأيديكم إِلَى الْهَلَاكِه
وَاحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○

196. And complete
The Hajj or 'umra²¹²

١٩٦- وَإِنْتُوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ

209. *Harām*—prohibited, sacred. The month of Pilgrimage (*Zul-hajj*) was a sacred month, in which warfare was prohibited by Arab custom. The month preceding (*Zul-qad*) and the month following (*Muharram*) were included in the prohibition, and *Muharram* was specially called *al-Harām*. Possibly *Muharram* is meant in the first line, and the other months and other prohibited things in "all things prohibited." In Rajab, also, war was prohibited. If the pagan enemies of Islam broke that custom and made war in the prohibited months, the Muslims were free also to break that custom but only to the same extent as the others broke it. Similarly the territory of Mecca was sacred, in which war was prohibited. If the enemies of Islam broke that custom, the Muslims were free to do so to that extent. Any convention is useless if one party does not respect it. There must be a law of equality. Or perhaps the word reciprocity may express it better.

210. At the same time the Muslims are commanded to exercise self-restraint as much as possible. Force is a dangerous weapon. It may have to be used for self-defence or self-preservation, but we must always remember that self-restraint is pleasing in the eyes of God. Even when we are fighting, it should be for a principle, not out of passion.

211. Every fight requires the wherewithals for the fight, the "sinews of war." If the war is just and in the Cause of God, all who have wealth must spend it freely. That may be their contribution to the Cause, in addition to their personal effort, or if for any reason they are unable to fight. If they hug their wealth, perhaps their own hands are helping in their own self destruction. Or if their wealth is being spent, not in the Cause of God, but in something which pleases their fancy, it may be that the advantage goes to the enemy, and they are by their action helping their own destruction. In all things, their standard should be, not selfishness, but the good of their brethren, for such good is pleasing to God.

212. See ii. 158, n. 161. The Hajj is the complete pilgrimage, of which the chief rites are during the first ten days of the month of *Zul-hajj*. The 'umra is a less formal pilgrimage at any time of the year. In either case, intending pilgrim commences by putting on a simple garment of unsewn cloth in two pieces when he is some distance yet from Mecca. The putting on of the pilgrim garb (*ihram*) is symbolical of his renouncing the vanities of the world. After this and until the end of the pilgrimage he must not wear other clothes, or ornaments, anoint his hair, use perfumes, hunt, or do other prohibited acts. The completion of the pilgrimage is symbolised by the shaving of the head for men, and the cutting off of a few locks of the hair of the head for women, the putting off of the *ihram* and the resumption of the ordinary dress.

Here we are told : (1) that having once undertaken the pilgrimage, we must complete it; (2) that we must do it not for worldly ends, but as a symbol of our service and worship to God; (3) that if we are prevented, for any reason, from completing the rites, a symbolical completion can be made by sending an offering for sacrifice; sacrifice would have been offered if we had been present personally; here we would send the sacrifice vicariously, and when it is likely to reach the place of sacrifice, we could then shave our heads and resume our ordinary dress and avocations.

In the service of God.
 But if ye are prevented
 (From completing it),
 Send an offering
 For sacrifice,
 Such as ye may find,
 And do not shave your heads
 Until the offering reaches
 The place of sacrifice.
 And if any of you is ill,²¹³
 Or has an ailment in his scalp,
 (Necessitating shaving),
 (He should) in compensation
 Either fast, or feed the poor,
 Or offer sacrifice ;
 And when ye are
 In peaceful conditions (again),²¹⁴
 If any one wishes
 To continue the 'umra
 On to the Hajj,
 He must make an offering,
 Such as he can afford,
 But if he cannot afford it,
 He should fast
 Three days during the Hajj
 And seven days on his return,
 Making ten days in all.
 This is for those
 Whose household
 Is not in (the precincts²¹⁵
 Of) the Sacred Mosque.
 And fear God,
 And know that God
 Is strict in punishment.²¹⁶

فَإِنْ أَحْصَرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ
 وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ
 حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ
 فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا
 أَوْ بِأَمٍّ أَدَّى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فِدْيَةً مِنْ صِيَامٍ
 أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ
 فَإِذَا أَتَيْتُمْ
 فَمَنْ تَشَاءَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ
 فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ
 فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامٌ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ
 وَ سَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ
 تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ
 ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِي السَّعْيِ
 الْحَرَامِ
 وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 وَ اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

213. If any one is taken ill after putting on the *ihram*, so that he has to put on other clothes, or if he has trouble or skin disease in his head or insects in his hair, and he has to shave his head before completion, he should fast (three days, say the Commentators), or feed the poor, or offer sacrifice.

214. When this was revealed, the city of Mecca was in the hands of the enemies of Islam, and the regulations about the fighting and the pilgrimage came together and were interconnected. But the revelation provides, as always, for the particular occasion, and also for normal conditions. Mecca soon passed out of the hands of the enemies of Islam. People sometimes came long distances to Mecca before the Pilgrimage season began. Having performed the 'umra, they stayed on for the formal Hajj. In case the pilgrim had spent his money, he is shown what he can do, rich or poor, and yet hold his head high among his fellows, as having performed all rites as prescribed.

215. For residents in Mecca the question does not arise. They are there every day, and there is no question of 'umra for them.

216. This closes the section about the duties of fighting and introduces the connected question of pilgrimage in a sort of transition. Fighting is connected with fear, and while it is meritorious to obey God, we are warned that we must not allow our selfish passions to carry us away, because it is in such times of stress that our spirit is tested. Verse 195 ended with a benediction for those who do good. This verse ends with a warning to those who take advantage of God's cause to transgress the limits, for the punishment is equally sure. The next verse shows us the pitfalls we must avoid in a large concourse of people.

SECTION 25.

197. **For Hajj**

Are the months well known.²¹⁷
 If any one undertakes
 That duty therein,
 Let there be no obscenity,
 Nor wickedness,
 Nor wrangling
 In the Hajj.
 And whatever good
 Ye do, (be sure)
 God knoweth it.
 And take a provision²¹⁸
 (With you) for the journey,
 But the best of provisions
 Is right conduct.
 So fear Me,
 O ye that are wise.

١٩٧- الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَةٌ
 فَمَنْ قَرَضَ فِيهِمَنِ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ
 وَلَا فُسُوقَ
 وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ
 وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ
 وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى
 وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ ○

هَذَا الَّذِي صَلَّاهُ

198. It is no crime in you
 If ye seek of the bounty
 Of your Lord (during
 Pilgrimage).²¹⁹
 Then when ye pour down
 From (Mount) 'Arafāt,
 Celebrate the praises of God
 At the Sacred Monument.²²⁰

١٩٨- لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ
 أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
 فَإِذَا أَقَضْتُمْ مِنْ عَرَفَاتٍ
 فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ

217. The months well known : the months of Shawwāl, Zul-qa'd and Zul-hajj (up to the 10th or the 13th) are set apart for the rites of Hajj. That is to say, the first rites may begin as early as the beginning of Shawwāl, with a definite approach to Mecca, but the chief rites are concentrated on the first ten days of Zul-hajj, and specially on the 8th, 9th and 10th of that month, when the concourse of pilgrims reaches its height. The chief rites may be briefly enumerated : (1) The wearing of the pilgrim garment (*ihram*) from certain points definitely fixed on all the roads to Mecca : after this the pilgrimage prohibitions come into operation and the pilgrim is dedicated to worship and prayer and the denial of vanities : (2) the going round the Ka'ba seven times (*tawāf*), typifying activity, with the kissing of the little Black Stone built into the wall, the symbol of concentration in the love of God ; (3) after a short prayer at the Station of Abraham (Q. ii. 125), the pilgrim goes to the hills Safa and Marwa (Q. ii. 158), the symbols of patience and perseverance ; (4) the great Sermon (*Khutba*) on the 7th of Zul-hajj, when the whole assembly listens to an exposition of the meaning of Hajj ; (5) the visit on the eighth, of the whole body of pilgrims to the Valley of Mīna (about six miles north of Mecca), where the pilgrims halt and stay the night, proceeding on the ninth to the plain and hill of 'Arafāt, about five miles further north, which commemorates the reunion of Adam and Eve after their wanderings, and is also called the Mount of Mercy ; (6) the tenth day, the 'Id Day, the day of Sacrifice, when the sacrifice is offered in the Valley of Mīna, and the symbolic ceremony of casting seven stones at the Evil One is performed on the first occasion ; it is continued on subsequent days ; both rites are connected with the story of Abraham ; this is the 'Id-ul-Adhā ; note that the ceremony is symbolically connected with the rejection of evil in thought, word, and deed. This closes the Pilgrimage, but a stay of two or three days after this is recommended, and this is called *Tashreeq*.

218. It is recommended that pilgrims should come with provisions, so that they should not be compelled to resort to begging. But, as usual, our thought is directed at once from the physical to the spiritual. If provisions are required for a journey on earth, how much more important to provide for the final journey into the future world ? The best of such provisions is right conduct, which is the same as the fear of God.

219. Legitimate trade is allowed, in the interests both of the honest trader, who can thus meet his own expenses, and of the generality of pilgrims, who would otherwise be greatly inconvenienced for the necessities of life. But the profit must be sought as from the ' bounty of God'. There should be no profiteering, or trade "tricks". Good, honest trade is a form of service to the community, and therefore to God.

220. About midway between 'Arafāt and Mīna (see n. 217 to ii. 197) is a place called Muzdalifa where the Holy Apostle offered up a long prayer. It has thus become a Sacred Monument and pilgrims are directed to follow that example on their return. A special reason for this is given in the note following.

And celebrate His praises
As He has directed you,
Even though, before this,
Ye went astray.²²¹

199. Then pass on
At a quick pace from the place
Whence it is usual
For the multitude²²²
So to do, and ask
For God's forgiveness.
For God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

200. So when ye have
Accomplished your holy rites,
Celebrate the praises of God,
As ye used to celebrate
The praises of your fathers,—²²³
Yea, with far more
Heart and soul.
There are men who say :
" Our Lord ! Give us
(Thy bounties) in this world ! "
But they will have
No portion in the Hereafter.²²⁴

201. And there are men who say :
" Our Lord ! Give us
Good in this world
And good in the Hereafter,
And defend us
From the torment
Of the Fire ! "

وَالذِّكْرُ كَمَا هَدَيْتُمْ
وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ ۝

١٩٩- ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ

النَّاسُ

وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٢٠٠- فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مِنْاسِكُمْ

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ

كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي

الدُّنْيَا

وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ ۝

٢٠١- وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا

فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً

وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۝

221. Certain arrogant tribes living in Mecca used not to go to 'Arafat with the crowd but to stop short at Muzdalifa. They are rebuked for their arrogance and told that they must perform all the rites like the rest of the pilgrims. There is equality in Islam.

222. See the last note. Towards the end of the Pilgrimage the crowd is very great, and if any people loitered after 'Arafat, it would cause great confusion and inconvenience. The pace has therefore to be quick for every one; a very salutary regulation. Every member of the crowd must think of the comfort and convenience of the whole mass.

223. After the Pilgrimage, in Pagan times, the pilgrims used to gather in assemblies in which the praises of ancestors were sung. As the whole of the pilgrimage rites were spiritualised in Islam, so this aftermath of the Pilgrimage was also spiritualised. It was recommended for pilgrims to stay on two or three days after the pilgrimage, but they must use them in prayer and praise to God. See ii. 203 below.

224. If you hasten to get all the good things of the world, and only think of them and pray for them, you would lose the higher things of the future. The proper Muslim attitude is neither to renounce this world nor to be so engrossed in it as to forget the spiritual future.

202. To these will be allotted²²⁵
What they have earned ;
And God is quick in account.

203. Celebrate the praises of God
During the Appointed Days,²²⁶
But if any one hastens
To leave in two days,
There is no blame on him,
And if any one stays on,
There is no blame on him.
If his aim is to do right.
Then fear God, and know
That ye will surely
Be gathered unto Him.

204. ~~There~~ There is the type of man²²⁷
Whose speech
About this world's life
May dazzle thee,
And he calls God to witness
About what is in his heart ;
Yet is he the most contentious
Of enemies.

205. When he turns his back,
His aim everywhere
Is to spread mischief
Through the earth and destroy
Crops and cattle.
But God loveth not mischief.

206. When it is said to him,
"Fear God,"
He is led by arrogance
To (more) crime.

٢٠٢- أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا
وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ○

٢٠٣- وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ
فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ
فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ

وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ لِمَنِ الْاِثْمُ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنكُمُ إِلَٰهِي تَحْشُرُونَ ○

٢٠٤- وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُجْجِبُكَ
قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

وَيُشْهِدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ
وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ ○

٢٠٥- وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ
لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ ○

٢٠٦- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ
أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ

225. Our spiritual account is mounting up, both on the debit and credit side. In worldly accounts, both our profits and our losses may be delayed. But in God's books there is no delay. Our actions go before us. (See ii. 95 n.)

226. *The Appointed Days* : the three days after the tenth, when the Pilgrims stay on in the Valley of Mina for prayer and praise. They are the days of *Tashriq* (see ii. 200, n. 223). It is optional for pilgrims to leave on the second or third day.

227. The two contrasted types of men mentioned in ii. 200 and 201 are here further particularised ; the glib hypocrite who appears worldly-wise but plans harms, contrasted with the sincere believer who is prepared to suffer martyrdom for his faith. The Commentators give names of people who exemplified these types. The mischief-maker has a smooth tongue and indulges in plausible talk with many oaths. He appears to be worldly-wise, and though you may despise him for his worldliness, you may not realise his frauds. Behind your back he is an implacable enemy. He stirs up quarrels, and causes all sorts of mischief to you or your friends. He can never win God's love, and we are warned against his tricks.

Enough for him is Hell ;—
An evil bed indeed
(To lie on) !²²⁸

207. And there is the type of man.
Who gives his life
To earn the pleasure of God;
And God is full of kindness
To (His) devotees.²²⁹

208. **Q** ye who believe !
Enter into Islam
Whole-heartedly ;
And follow not
The foot-steps
Of the Evil One ;
For he is to you
An avowed enemy.

209. If ye backslide
After the Clear (Signs)
Have come to you,
Then know that God
Is Exalted in Power, Wise.²³⁰

210. Will they wait
Until God comes to them
In canopies of clouds,
With angels (in His train)
And the question
Is (thus) settled ?
But to God
Do all questions
Go back (for decision).²³¹

SECTION 26.

211. **A**sk the Children of Israel²³²
How many Clear (Signs)

فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَلَيْسَ الْبِهَادُ ۝

٢٠٧- وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُشْرِي نَفْسَهُ
ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ ۖ
وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝

٢٠٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً ۖ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ
إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ۝

٢٠٩- فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمْ
الْبَيِّنَاتُ
فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

٢١٠- هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ
فِي ظُلُلٍ مِّنَ الْغَمَامِ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ ۗ
فَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ۝

٢١١- سَلْ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ كَمْ آتَيْنَاهُم مِّنْ

228. According to the English saying, "As you have made your bed, so you must lie in it."

229. This second type of man—firm, sincere, devoted, willing to give his life for the faith that is in him—was common in early Islam. Such men were its pillars. Through persecution, obloquy, torture, threat to their own lives or the lives of those dear to them, they stood by their leader and many of them gave their lives. That is what established Islam. We are asked in the next verse to follow this type and shun the other or evil type. If we do that, our Cause is safe.

230. If you backslide after the conviction has been brought home to you, you may cause some inconvenience to the Cause, or to those who counted upon you, but do not be so arrogant as to suppose that you will defeat God's Power and Wisdom. The loss will be your own.

231. If faith is wanting, all sorts of excuses are made to resist the appeal of God. They might and do say: "Oh yes! we shall believe if God appears to us with His angels in His glory!" In other words they want to settle the question in their way, and not in God's way. That will not do. The decision in all questions belongs to God. If we are true to Him, we wait for His times and seasons, and do not expect Him to wait on ours.

232. The Israelites under Moses were shown God's glory and many clear Signs and yet they went after their own ways, and preferred their own whims and fancies. So do people in all ages. But let them not deceive themselves. God's justice is sure, and when it comes, it will be strict and unmistakable to those who reject His grace.

We have sent them.
But if any one,
After God's favour
Has come to him,
Substitutes (something else),
God is strict in punishment.²³³

212. The life of this world
Is alluring to those
Who reject faith,
And they scoff at those
Who believe.
But the righteous
Will be above them
On the Day of Resurrection;
For God bestows His abundance
Without measure
On whom He will.²³⁴

213. Mankind was one single nation,
And God sent Messengers
With glad tidings and warnings;
And with them He sent
The Book in truth,
To judge between people
In matters wherein
They differed;
But the People of the Book,
After the Clear Signs
Came to them, did not differ
Among themselves;
Except through selfish contumacy.
God by His Grace
Guided the Believers
To the Truth,
Concerning that
Wherein they differed
For God guides
Whom He will
To a path
That is straight.

214. Or do ye think
That ye shall enter

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُ وَمَنْ يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ
فَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ○

٢١٢- زَيْنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
وَاللَّهُ يَزِدُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ○

٢١٣- كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً
فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ
وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ
لِيُحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ
فِيمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ ۖ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ
فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ
مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ
إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ○

٢١٤- أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ

233. Cf. ii. 196 (end) where the question was of those who do not fear God. Here the question is of those who reject God's Signs.

234. God's gifts in this world seem unequal, and sometimes those get them who seem to deserve them least. God's bounty is unlimited, to the just as well as the unjust. In His wisdom He may give to whomsoever He pleases. The account is not taken now, but will be taken in the end, when the balance will be redressed.

The Garden (of Bliss)
Without such (trials).
As came to those
Who passed away
Before you ?
They encountered
Suffering and adversity,
And were so shaken in spirit
That even the Apostle
And those of faith
Who were with him
Cried : 'When (will come)
The help of God ?'
Ah ! Verily, the help of God
Is (always) near !

215. They ask thee
What they should spend
(In charity). Say : Whatever
Ye spend that is good,²³⁵
Is for parents and kindred
And orphans
And those in want
And for wayfarers.
And whatever ye do
That is good,—God
Knoweth it well.

216. Fighting is prescribed
For you, and ye dislike it.²³⁶
But it is possible
That ye dislike a thing
Which is good for you,
And that ye love a thing
Which is bad for you.
But God knoweth,
And ye know not.

وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ
قَبْلِكُمْ
مَسَّتْهُمْ الْبَاسَاءُ وَالضَّرَآءُ وَزُلْزَلُوا
حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
مَعَهُ
مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ
الْآرَآنَ نَصَرَ اللَّهُ قَرِيبٌ ○

٢١٥- يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ ه
قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ
وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ
وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ○
٢١٦- كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ
وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ
وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا
وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

235. Three questions arise in charity : (1) What shall we give ? (2) to whom shall we give ? and (3) how shall we give ? The answer is here. Give anything that is good, useful, helpful, valuable. It may be property or money ; it may be a helping hand ; it may be advice ; it may be a kind word ; "whatever ye do that is good" is charity. On the other hand, if you throw away what is useless, there is no charity in it. Or if you give something with a harmful intent, e.g., a sword to a madman, or a drug or sweets or even money to someone whom you want to entrap or corrupt, it is no charity but a gift of damnation. To whom should you give ? It may be tempting to earn the world's praise by a gift that will be talked about, but are you meeting the needs of those who have the first claim on you ? If you are not, you are like a person who defrauds creditors : it is no charity. Every gift is judged by its unselfish character : the degree of need or claim is a factor which you should consider : if you disregard it, there is something selfish behind it. How should it be given ? As in the sight of God ; this shuts out all pretence, show, and insincerity.

236. To fight in the cause of Truth is one of the highest forms of charity. What can you offer that is more precious than your own life ? But here again the limitations come in. If you are a mere brawler, or a selfish aggressive person, or a vainglorious bully, you deserve the highest censure. If you offer your life to the righteous Imam, who is only guided by God, you are an unselfish hero. God knows the value of things better than you do.

SECTION 27.

217. They ask thee
Concerning fighting
In the Prohibited Month.²³⁷
Say: " Fighting therein
Is a grave (offence) ;
But graver is it
In the sight of God
To prevent access
To the path of God,
To deny Him,
To prevent access
To the Sacred Mosque,
And drive out its members."²³⁸
Tumult and oppression²³⁹
Are worse than slaughter.
Nor will they cease
Fighting you until
They turn you back
From your faith
If they can.
And if any of you
Turn back from their faith
And die in unbelief,
Their works will bear no fruit
In this life
And in the Hereafter ;
They will be
Companions of the Fire
And will abide therein.
218. Those who believed
And those who suffered exile
And fought (and strove and
struggled)
In the path of God,—
They have the hope
Of the Mercy of God ;
And God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

٢١٧-يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ
قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ
وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ
وَالسَّيْدِ الْحَرَامِ
وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ اللَّهِ
وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ
وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يَقَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ
عَن دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا
وَمَن يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُم
عَن دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ
وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ
فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
هُم فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○
٢١٨-إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا
وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
أُولَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ○

237. *Prohibited Month* : See ii. 194, n. 209.

238. The intolerance and persecution of the Pagan clique at Mecca caused untold hardships to the holy Messenger of Islam and his early disciples. They bore all with meekness and long-suffering patience until the holy one permitted them to take up arms in self-defence. Then they were twitted with breach of the custom about Prohibited Months, though they were driven to fight during that period against their own feeling in self-defence. But their enemies not only forced them to engage in actual warfare, but interfered with their conscience, persecuted them and their families, openly insulted and denied God, kept out the Muslim Arabs from the Sacred Mosque, and exiled them. Such violence and intolerance are deservedly called worse than slaughter.

239. Cf. ii. 191, ii. 191, 193, where a similar phrase occurs. *Fitna*=trial, temptation, as in ii. 102 ; or tumult, sedition, oppression, as here ; M. M. A., H. G. S., and M. P. translate "persecution" in this passage, which is also legitimate, seeing that persecution is the suppression of some opinion by violence, force, or threats.

219. They ask thee
Concerning wine²⁴⁰ and
gambling.²⁴¹

Say : "In them is great sin,
And some profit, for men ;
But the sin is greater
Than the profit."

They ask thee how much
They are to spend ;
Say : "What is beyond²⁴²
Your needs."

Thus doth God
Make clear to you
His Signs : in order that
Ye may consider—

220. (Their bearings) on
This life and the Hereafter.²⁴³

They ask thee
Concerning orphans.²⁴⁴
Say : "The best thing to do
Is what is for their good ;
If ye mix
Their affairs with yours,
They are your brethren ;
But God knows

٢١٩- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ
قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ
وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ
وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِمَّنْ نَّفَعَهُمَا
وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ
قُلِ الْعَفْوَ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٥

٢٢٠- فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَى
قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ
وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَارْحَمُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ

240. *Wine*: *Khamr*: literally understood to mean the fermented juice of the grape; applied by analogy to all fermented liquor, and by further analogy to any intoxicating liquor or drug. There may possibly be some benefit in it, but the harm is greater than the benefit, especially if we look at it from a social as well as an individual point of view.

241. *Gambling*: *maisir*: literally, a means of getting something too easily, getting a profit without working for it; hence gambling. That is the principle on which gambling is prohibited. The form most familiar to the Arabs was gambling by casting lots by means of arrows, on the principle of a lottery: the arrows were marked and served the same purpose as a modern lottery ticket. Something, e.g., the carcase of a slaughtered animal, was divided into unequal parts. The marked arrows were drawn from a bag. Some were blank and those who drew them got nothing. Others indicated prizes, which were big or small. Whether you got a big share or a small share, or nothing, depended on pure luck, unless there was fraud also on the part of some persons concerned. The principle on which the objection is based is: that, even if there is no fraud, you gain what you have not earned, or lose on a mere chance. Dice and wagering are rightly held to be within the definition of gambling. But insurance is not gambling, when conducted on business principles. Here the basis for calculation is statistics on a large scale, from which mere chance is eliminated. The insurers themselves pay premia in proportion to risks, exactly and statistically calculated.

242. Hoarding is no use either to ourselves, or to any one else. We should use the wealth we need; any superfluities we must spend in good works or in charity.

243. Gambling and intemperance are social as well as individual sins. They may ruin us in our ordinary everyday worldly life, as well as our spiritual future. In case it is suggested that there is no harm in a little indulgence, we are asked to think over all its aspects, social and individual,—worldly and spiritual.

244. For orphans the best rule is to keep their property, household, and accounts separate, lest there should be any temptation to get a personal advantage to their guardian by mixing them with the guardian's property, household or accounts,—also to keep clear of any ideas of marriage, where this fiduciary relation exists. Q. vi. 152 may possibly, suggest complete separation. But it may be an economy and an advantage to the orphan to have his property and accounts administered with the guardian's property and accounts and to have him live in the guardian's household, or to marry into the guardian's family, especially where the orphan's property is small and he or she has no other friend. The test is: what is best in the orphan's interests? If the guardian does fall into temptation, even if human law does not detect him, he is told he is sinning in God's sight and that should keep him straight.

The man who means mischief
From the man who means good.
And if God had wished,
He could have put you
Into difficulties : He is indeed
Exalted in Power, Wise."²⁴⁵

الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْنَتْكُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

221. **Do** not marry
Unbelieving women (idolaters),
Until they believe :
A slave woman who believes
Is better than an unbelieving
woman,
Even though she allure you.
Nor marry (your girls)
To unbelievers until
They believe ;
A man slave who believes
Is better than an unbeliever,
Even though he allure you.²⁴⁶
Unbelievers do (but)
Beckon you to the Fire.
But God beckons by His Grace
To the Garden (of Bliss)
And forgiveness,
And makes His Signs
Clear to mankind :
Celebrate His praise.

٢٢١- وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنُوْا
وَلَا امْرَاةً مُّؤْمِنَةً خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ
وَلَوْ اَعْجَبَتْكُمْ
وَلَا تُنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنُوْا
وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ
خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ اَعْجَبَكُمْ
اُولٰٓئِكَ يَدْعُوْنَ اِلَى النَّارِ
وَاللّٰهُ يَدْعُوْا اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ
وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِاِذْنِهٖ
وَيُبَيِّنُ اٰيٰتِهٖ لِلنَّاسِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ٥

SECTION 28.

222. **They** ask thee
Concerning women's courses.
Say : They are
A hurt and a pollution.²⁴⁷

٢٢٢- وَيَسْأَلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيْضِ
قُلْ هُوَ اَذْيٌ

245. The idea in Islam is not to make God's law a burdensome fetter, but to ease a man's path in all kinds of difficult situations by putting him on his honour and trusting him. The strictest probity is demanded of him, but if he falls short of it, he is told that he cannot escape God's punishment even though he may evade human punishment.

246. Marriage is a most intimate communion, and the mystery of sex finds its highest fulfilment when intimate spiritual harmony is combined with the physical link. If religion is at all a real influence in life to both parties or to either party, a difference in this vital matter must affect the lives of both more profoundly than differences of birth, race, language, or position in life. It is therefore only right that the parties to be married should have the same spiritual outlook. If two persons love each other, their outlook in the highest things of life must be the same. Note that religion is not here a mere label or a matter of custom or birth. The two persons may have been born in different religions, but if by their mutual influence, they come to see the truth in the same way, they must openly accept the same rites and the same social brotherhood. Otherwise the position will become impossible individually and socially.

247. *Aṣan* : hurt, pollution. Both aspects must be remembered. Physical cleanliness and purity make for health, bodily and spiritual. But the matter should be looked at from the woman's point of view as well as the man's. To her there is danger of hurt, and she should have every consideration. In the animal world, instinct is a guide which is obeyed. Man should in this respect be better ; he is often worse.

So keep away from women
In their courses, and do not
Approach them until
They are clean.
But when they have
Purified themselves,
Ye may approach them
In any manner, time, or place²⁴⁸
Ordained for you by God.
For God loves those
Who turn to Him constantly
And He loves those
Who keep themselves pure and
clean.

فَاَعْتَرِزُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ
وَلَا تَقْرُبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهَرْنَ
فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ
فَأَتَوْهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ
وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ○

223. Your wives are
As a tilth²⁴⁹ unto you ;
So approach your tilth
When or how ye will ;
But do some good act
For your souls beforehand ;
And fear God,
And know that ye are
To meet Him (in the Hereafter),
And give (these) good tidings²⁵⁰
To those who believe.

٢٢٣- نِسَاءُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَكُمْ
فَأَتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ
وَقَدْ مَوَا لِنَفْسِكُمْ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلْقَوَةٌ
وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

224. And make not
God's (name) an excuse
In your oaths against
Doing good, or acting rightly,
Or making peace
Between persons ;

٢٢٤- وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً
لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا
وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ

248. *Haithu*: A comprehensive word referring to manner, time, or place. The most delicate matters are here referred to in the most direct and yet helpful terms. In sex morality, manner, time, and place are all important : and the highest standards are set by social laws, by our own refined instinct of mutual consideration, and above all, by the light shed by the highest Teachers from the wisdom which they receive from our Maker, Who loves purity and cleanliness in all things.

249. Sex is not a thing to be ashamed of, or to be treated lightly, or to be indulged to excess. It is as solemn a fact as any in life. It is compared to a husbandman's tilth ; it is a serious affair to him : he sows the seed in order to reap the harvest. But he chooses his own time and mode of cultivation. He does not sow out of season nor cultivate in a manner which will injure or exhaust the soil. He is wise and considerate and does not run riot. Coming from the simile to human beings, every kind of mutual consideration is required, but above all, we must remember that even in these matters there is a spiritual aspect. We must never forget our souls, and that we are responsible to God.

It was carnal-minded men who invented the doctrine of original sin : " Behold," says the Psalmist, " I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," (Psalms li. 5). This is entirely repudiated by Islam, in which the office of father and mother is held in the highest veneration. Every child of pure love is born pure. Celibacy is not necessarily a virtue, and may be a vice.

250. Our highest spiritual ambition should be the hope of meeting God. To uphold such a hope is to give glad tidings to people of faith. It would only be unrepentant sinners who would fear the meeting. Note how the most sensuous matters are discussed frankly, and immediately taken up into the loftiest regions of spiritual upliftment.

For God is One
Who heareth and knoweth ²⁵¹
All things.

وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

225. God will not
Call you to account
For thoughtlessness
In your oaths,
But for the intention
In your hearts ; ²⁵²
And He is
Oft-forgiving
Most Forbearing.

۲۲۵- لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ
بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ
وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ۝

226. For those who take
An oath for abstinence
From their wives,
A waiting for four months
Is ordained ;
If then they return,
God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

۲۲۶- لِلَّذِينَ يُؤْثِرُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ
تَرْبُصَ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ
فَإِنْ قَاءُوا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

227. But if their intention
Is firm for divorce,
God heareth
And knoweth all things. ²⁵³

۲۲۷- وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

228. Divorced women
Shall wait concerning themselves

۲۲۸- وَالْمُطَلَّقَاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ

251. The Arabs had many special kinds of oaths, for each of which they had a special name in their language. Some of them related to sex matters, and caused misunderstanding, alienation, division, or separation between husband and wife. This and the following three verses refer to them. In ii. 214 we are first of all told in perfectly general terms that we are not to make an oath in the name of God an excuse for not doing the right thing when it is pointed out to us, or for refraining from doing something which will bring people together. If we were swayed by anger or passion or mere caprice, God knows our inmost hearts, and right conduct and not obstinacy or quibbling is what He demands from us.

252. It has been held that thoughtless oaths, if there is no intention behind them, can be expiated by an act of charity.

253. Verses 225-27 should be read together with verse 224. The latter, though it is perfectly general leads up to the other three.

The Pagan Arabs had a custom very unfair to women in wedlock, and this was suppressed by Islam. Sometimes, in a fit of anger or caprice, a husband would take an oath by God not to approach his wife. This deprived her of conjugal rights, but at the same time kept her tied to him indefinitely, so that she could not marry again. If the husband was remonstrated with, he would say that his oath by God bound him. Islam in the first place disapproved of thoughtless oaths, but insisted on proper solemn intentional oaths being scrupulously observed. In a serious matter like that affecting a wife, if the oath was put forward as an excuse, the man is told, that it is no excuse at all. God looks to intention, not mere thoughtless words. The parties are allowed a period of four months to make up their minds and see if an adjustment is possible. Reconciliation is recommended, but if they are really determined against reconciliation, it is unfair to keep them tied indefinitely. Divorce is the only fair and equitable course, though, as the Apostle has declared, of all things permitted, divorce is the most hateful in the sight of God. In the circumstances, God will forgive, for He knows the real grievances of each of the parties, and will hear the cry of all who suffer.

For three monthly periods.
Nor is it lawful for them
To hide what God
Hath created in their wombs,
If they have faith
In God and the Last Day.
And their husbands
Have the better right
To take them back
In that period, if
They wish for reconciliation.²⁵⁴
And women shall have rights
Similar to the rights
Against them, according
To what is equitable ;
But men have a degree
(Of advantage) over them.²⁵⁵
And God is Exalted in Power,
Wise.

SECTION 29.

229. **A** divorce is only ²⁵⁶
Permissible twice: after that,
The parties should either hold
Together on equitable terms,
Or separate with kindness.²⁵⁷
It is not lawful for you,
(Men), to take back
Any of your gifts (from you wives),
Except when both parties
Fear that they would be
Unable to keep the limits

بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ
وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ
أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ
إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ
أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا
وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

٢٢٩- الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَيْنِ
فَإِمْسَاكِ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ
بِإِحْسَانٍ
وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا
آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا
إِلَّا أَنْ يَخْشَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ

254. Islam tries to maintain the married state as far as possible, especially where children are concerned, but it is against the restriction of the liberty of men and women in such vitally important matters as love and family life. It will check hasty action as far as possible, and leave the door to reconciliation open at many stages. Even after divorce a suggestion of reconciliation is made, subject to certain precautions (mentioned in the following verses) against thoughtless action. A period of waiting ('iddat) for three monthly courses is prescribed, in order to see if the marriage conditionally dissolved is likely to result in issue. But this is not necessary where the divorced woman is a virgin: Q. xxxiii. 49. It is definitely declared that women and men shall have similar rights against each other.

255. The difference in economic position between the sexes makes the man's rights and liabilities a little greater than the woman's. Q. iv. 34 refers to the duty of the man to maintain the woman and to a certain difference in nature between the sexes. Subject to this, the sexes are on terms of equality in law, and in certain matters the weaker sex is entitled to special protection.

256. Where divorce for mutual incompatibility is allowed, there is danger that the parties might act hastily, then repeat, and again wish to separate. To prevent such capricious action repeatedly, a limit is prescribed. Two divorces (with a reconciliation between) are allowed. After that the parties must definitely make up their minds, either to dissolve their union permanently, or to live honourable lives together in mutual love and forbearance—to "hold together on equitable terms," neither party worrying the other nor grumbling nor evading the duties and responsibilities of marriage.

257. If a separation is inevitable, the parties should not throw mud at each other, but recognise what is right and honourable on a consideration of all the circumstances. In any case a man is not allowed to ask back for any gifts or property he may have given to the wife. This is for the protection of the economically weaker sex. Lest that protective provision itself work against the woman's freedom, an exception is made in the next clause.

Ordained by God.²⁵⁸
 If ye (judges) do indeed
 Fear that they would be
 Unable to keep the limits
 Ordained by God,
 There is no blame on either
 Of them if she give
 Something for her freedom
 These are the limits
 Ordained by God;
 So do not transgress them.
 If any do transgress
 The limits ordained by God,
 Such persons wrong
 (Themselves as well as others).²⁵⁹

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ
 فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ
 بِهِ
 تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ
 فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا
 وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ
 فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ○

230. So if a husband
 Divorces his wife (irrevocably),²⁶⁰
 He cannot, after that,
 Remarry her until
 After she has married
 Another husband and
 He has divorced her.
 In that case there is
 No blame on either of them
 If they reunite, provided
 They feel that they
 Can keep the limits
 Ordained by God.
 Such are the limits
 Ordained by God,
 Which He makes plain
 To those who understand.

٢٣٠- فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا
 فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ
 مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرًا
 فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا
 فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا
 أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ
 اللَّهِ
 وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ
 يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

231. When ye divorce²⁶¹
 Women, and they fulfil

٢٣١- وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ

258. All the prohibitions and limits prescribed here are in the interests of good and honourable lives for both sides, and in the interests of a clean and honourable social life, without public or private scandals. If there is any fear that in safeguarding her economic rights, her very freedom of person may suffer, the husband refusing the dissolution of marriage, and perhaps treating her with cruelty, then, in such exceptional cases, it is permissible to give some material consideration to the husband, but the need and equity of this should be submitted to the judgment of impartial judges, i.e., properly constituted courts. A divorce of this kind is called *khul'a*.

259. *Wrong (themselves as well as others)* : *zālimūn* : for the root meaning of *zulm* see n. 51. ii. 35.

260. This is in continuation of the first sentence of ii. 229. Two divorces followed by reunion are permissible; the third time the divorce becomes irrevocable, until the woman marries some other man and he divorces her. This is to set an almost impossible condition. The lesson is: if a man loves a woman he should not allow a sudden gust of temper or anger to induce him to take hasty action. What happens after two divorces, if the man takes her back? See n. 261 to ii. 231.

261. If the man takes back his wife after two divorces, he must do so only on equitable terms, i.e., he must not put pressure on the woman to prejudice her rights in any way, and they must live clean and honourable lives, respecting each other's personalities. There are here two conditional clauses: (1) when ye divorce women, and (2) when they fulfil their '*Iddat*': followed by two consequential clauses, (3) take them back on equitable terms, or (4) set them free with kindness. The first is connected with the third and the second with the fourth. Therefore if the husband wishes to resume the marital relations, he need not wait for '*Iddat*'. But if he does not so wish, she is free to marry someone else after '*Iddat*'. For the meaning of '*Iddat*' see n. 254 above.

The term of their ('Iddat),
 Either take them back
 On equitable terms
 Or set them free
 On equitable terms ;
 But do not take them back
 To injure them, (or) to take
 Undue advantage ;²⁶²
 If any one does that,
 He wrongs his own soul.
 Do not treat God's Signs
 As a jest, ²⁶³
 But solemnly rehearse ²⁶⁴
 God's favours on you,
 And the fact that He
 Sent down to you
 The Book
 And Wisdom,
 For your instruction.
 And fear God,
 And know that God
 Is well acquainted
 With all things.

SECTION 30.

232. **W**hen ye divorce
 Women, and they fulfil
 The term of their ('Iddat),
 Do not prevent them ²⁶⁵
 From marrying
 Their (former) husbands,
 If they mutually agree
 On equitable terms.
 This instruction
 Is for all amongst you,
 Who believe in God
 And the Last Day.
 That is (the course

أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ
 أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ
 وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا
 وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ
 فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ
 وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا
 وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
 وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ
 يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 وَاعْلَمُوا
 أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

۲۳۲- وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَعْنِ أَجَلَهُنَّ
 فَلَا تَعْضِلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ
 إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
 ذَلِكَ يُوعِظُ بِهِ
 مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ
 يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

262. Let no one think that the liberty given to him can be used for his own selfish ends. If he uses the law for the injury of the weaker party, his own moral and spiritual nature suffers.

263. These difficult questions of sex relations are often treated as a joke. But they profoundly affect our individual lives, the lives of our children, and the purity and well-being of the society in which we live. This aspect of the question is reiterated again and again.

264. *Rehearse*: *ghkr*, cf. ii. 151 and n. 156. We are asked to remember in our own minds, and to proclaim and praise, and be proud of God's favours on us. His favours are immeasurable: not the least are His Revelations, and the wisdom which He has given to us to enable us to judge and act up to His guidance.

265. The termination of a marriage bond is a most serious matter for family and social life. And every lawful device is approved which can equitably bring back those who have lived together, provided only there is mutual love and they can live on honourable terms with each other. If these conditions are fulfilled, it is not right for outsiders to prevent or hinder reunion. They may be swayed by property or other considerations. This verse was occasioned by an actual case that was referred to the holy Apostle in his life-time.

Making for) most virtue
And purity amongst you,
And God knows,
And ye know not.

233. **¶** The mothers shall give suck ²⁶⁶

To their offspring
For two whole years,
If the father desires
To complete the term.
But he shall bear the cost
Of their food and clothing
On equitable terms.
No soul shall have
A burden laid on it
Greater than it can bear.
No mother shall be
Treated unfairly
On account of her child.
Nor father
On account of his child,
An heir shall be chargeable
In the same way.
If they both decide
On weaning,
By mutual consent,
And after due consultation,
There is no blame on them.
If ye decide
On a foster-mother
For your offspring,
There is no blame on you,
Provided ye pay (the mother)
What ye offered,
On equitable terms.
But fear God and know
That God sees well
What ye do.

234. **¶** If any of you die
And leave widows behind,

ذِكْرُكُمْ أَتَى لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

٢٣٣- وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ
حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ
لِئِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ
وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ
وَكَسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا
لَا تَضَارُّ وَالِدَةٌ بِوَلَدِهَا
وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ
وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ
فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا
وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا
وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ
أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُمُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَاَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ○

٢٣٤- وَالَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَكُمْ مِنْكُمْ يُبَيِّنُوا

266. As this comes in the midst of the regulations on divorce, it applies primarily to cases of divorce, where some definite rule is necessary, as the father and mother would not, on account of the divorce, probably be on good terms, and the interests of the children must be safeguarded. As, however, the wording is perfectly general, it has been held that the principle applies equally to the father and mother in wedlock: each must fulfil his or her part in the fostering of the child. On the other hand, it is provided that the child shall not be used as an excuse for driving a hard bargain on either side. By mutual consent they can agree to some course that is reasonable and equitable, both as regards the period before weaning (the maximum being two years) and the engagement of a wet-nurse, or (by analogy) for artificial feeding. But the mother's privileges must not be curtailed simply because by mutual consent she does not nurse the baby. In a matter of this kind the ultimate appeal must be to godliness, for all legal remedies are imperfect and may be misused.

They shall wait concerning
 themselves
 Four months and ten days :²⁶⁷
 When they have fulfilled
 Their term, there is no blame
 On you if they dispose
 Of themselves in a just
 And reasonable manner.
 And God is well acquainted
 With what ye do.

أَزْوَاجًا يَرْتَضْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ
 وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ
 فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا
 تَعْلَنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
 وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝

235. There is no blame
 On you if ye make
 An offer of betrothal
 Or hold it in your hearts.²⁶⁸
 God knows that ye
 Cherish them in your hearts :
 But do not make a secret contract
 With them except in terms
 Honourable, nor resolve on the tie
 Of marriage till the term
 Prescribed is fulfilled.
 And know that God
 Knoweth what is in your hearts,
 And take heed of Him ;
 And know that God is
 Oft-forgiving, Most Forbearing.

٢٣٥- وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ
 مِنْ خُطْبَةِ النِّسَاءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ
 عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ
 وَلَكِنْ لَا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا
 قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا وَلَا تَعْرِضُوا عَقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ
 حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ
 وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ
 فَاحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ۝

SECTION 31.

236. There is no blame on you
 If ye divorce women
 Before consummation
 Or the fixation of their dower ;
 But bestow on them
 (A suitable gift),
 The wealthy
 According to his means,
 And the poor
 According to his means ;—

٢٣٦- لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ
 مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ
 أَوْ تَقَرَّضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۖ وَمِمَّا يُعْطَوْنَ
 عَلَى الْبُيُوتِ قَدَرُهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتَدِرِ قَدَرُهُ ۚ

267. The 'Iddat of widowhood (four months and ten days) is longer than the 'Iddat of divorce (three monthly courses, ii. 228). In the latter the only consideration is to ascertain if there is any unborn issue of the marriage dissolved. This is clear from xxxiii. 49, where it is laid down that there is no 'Iddat for virgin divorces. In the former there is in addition the consideration of mourning and respect for the deceased husband. In either case, if it is proved that there is unborn issue, there is of course no question of remarriage for the woman until it is born and for a reasonable time afterwards. Meanwhile her maintenance on a reasonable scale is chargeable to the late husband or his estate.

268. A definite contract of remarriage for the woman during her period of 'Iddat of widowhood is forbidden as obviously unseemly, as also any secrecy in such matters. It would bind the woman at a time when she is not fitted to exercise her fullest judgment. But circumstances may arise when an offer (open for future consideration but not immediately decided) may be to her interests, and this is permissible. In mystic interpretation the cherishing of love in one's heart without outward show or reward is the true test of sincerity and devotion.

A gift of a reasonable amount
Is due from those
Who wish to do the right thing.

237. And if ye divorce them
Before consummation,
But after the fixation
Of a dower for them,
Then the half of the dower
(Is due to them), unless
They remit it
Or (the man's half) is remitted ²⁶⁹
By him in whose hands
Is the marriage tie; ²⁷⁰
And the remission
(Of the man's half)
Is the nearest to righteousness.
And do not forget
Liberality between yourselves.
For God sees well
All that ye do.

238. Guard strictly
Your (habit of) prayers,
Especially the Middle Prayer; ²⁷¹
And stand before God
In a devout (frame of mind).

239. If ye fear (an enemy), ²⁷²
Pray on foot, or riding,
(As may be most convenient),
But when ye are
In security, celebrate
God's praises in the manner
He has taught you,
Which ye knew not (before).

مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○

٢٣٧- وَإِنْ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ
لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ

إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ

أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الَّذِي

بِيَدِهِ عَقْدَةُ الزَّكَامَةِ

وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى

وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ○

٢٣٨- حَفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ

وَالصَّلَاةَ الْوُسْطَى

وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ○

٢٣٩- فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَلًا

فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ

كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم

مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

269. The law declares that in such a case half the dower fixed shall be paid by the man to the woman. But it is open to the woman to remit the half due to her or to the man to remit the half which he is entitled to deduct, and thus pay the whole.

270. *Him in whose hands is the marriage tie*: According to Hanafi doctrine this is the husband himself, who can ordinarily by his act dissolve the marriage. It therefore behoves him to be all the more liberal to the woman and pay her the full dower even if the marriage was not consummated.

271. *The Middle Prayer*: *Ṣalātul-wuṣṭā*: may be translated "the best or the most excellent prayer." Authorities differ as to the exact meaning of this phrase. The weight of the authorities seems to be in favour of interpreting this as the 'Aṣr prayer (in the middle of the afternoon). This is apt to be most neglected, and yet this is the most necessary, to remind us of God in the midst of our worldly affairs. There is a special Sūra (S. cii.) entitled 'Aṣr, of which the mystic meaning is appropriately dealt with under that Sūra.

272. Verses 238-39 are parenthetical, introducing the subject of prayer in danger. This is more fully dealt with in iv. 101-03.

240. Those of you
Who die and leave widows
Should bequeath
For their widows
A year's maintenance
And residence ; ²⁷³
But if they leave
(The residence),
There is no blame on you
For what they do
With themselves.
Provided it is reasonable.
And God is Exalted in Power,
Wise.

۲۴۰- وَالَّذِينَ يَتُوفُونَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذُرُونَ
أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ
مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرِ إِخْرَاجٍ
فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَعْرُوفٍ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

241. For divorced women
Maintenance (should be provided)
On a reasonable (scale).
This is a duty
On the righteous.

۲۴۱- وَاللَّيْطَلَقَاتِ مَتَاعٌ بِالمَعْرُوفِ
حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

242. Thus doth God
Make clear His Signs
To you : in order that
Ye may understand.

۲۴۲- كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۝

- C. 51.—Fighting in defence of Truth and Right
(ii. 243-253.) Is not to be undertaken light-heartedly,
Nor to be evaded as a duty.
Life and Death are in the hands of God.
Not all can be chosen to fight
For God. It requires constancy,
Firmness, and faith. Given these,
Large armies can be routed
By those who battle for God,
As shown by the courage of David,
Whose prowess single-handed
Disposed of the Philistines.
The mission of some of the apostles,
Like Jesus, was different,—
Less wide in scope than that
Of Muṣṭafa. God's plan
Is universal, and He carries it out
As He wills.

273. Opinions differ whether the provision (of a year's maintenance, with residence), for a widow is abrogated by the share which the widow gets (one-eighth or one-fourth) as an heir (Q. iv. 12). I do not think it is. The bequest (where made) takes effect as a charge on the property, but the widow can leave the house before the year is out, and presumably the maintenance then ceases.

SECTION 32.

243. Didst thou not
Turn by vision to those
Who abandoned their homes,
Though they were thousands
(In number), for fear of death?
God said to them: "Die":
Then He restored them to life.²⁷⁴
For God is full of bounty
To mankind, but
Most of them are ungrateful.

244. Then fight in the cause
Of God, and know that God
Heareth and knoweth all things.²⁷⁵

245. Who is he
That will loan to God
And beautiful loan,²⁷⁶ which God
Will double unto his credit
And multiply many times?
It is God that giveth (you)
Want or Plenty.
And to Him shall be
Your return.

246. Hast thou not
Turned thy vision to the Chiefs
Of the Children of Israel
After (the time of) Moses? ²⁷⁷

٢٤٣- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ
وَهُمْ آلُفٌ حَذَرُ الْمَوْتِ
فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ
وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ○

٢٤٤- وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ○

٢٤٥- مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي
يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا
فِيُضَعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً
وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْضُطُ
وَالِيهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ○

٢٤٦- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَا
يَكِيْنُ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى

274. We now return to the subject of *Jihād*, which we left at ii, 214-216. We are to be under no illusion about it. If we are not prepared to fight for our faith, with our lives and all our resources, both our lives and our resources will be wiped out by our enemies. As to life, God gave it, and a coward is not likely to save it. It has happened again and again in history that men who tamely submitted to be driven from their homes although they were more numerous than their enemies, had the sentence of death pronounced on them for their cowardice, and they deserved it. But God gives further and further chances in His mercy. This is a lesson to every generation. The Commentators differ as to the exact episode referred to, but the wording is perfectly general, and so is the lesson to be learnt from it.

275. For God's cause we must fight, but never to satisfy our own selfish passions or greed, for the warning is repeated: "God heareth and knoweth all things": all deeds, words, and motives are perfectly open before Him, however we might conceal them from men or even from ourselves. See ii, 216, n. 236.

276. Spending in the cause of God is called metaphorically "a beautiful loan". It is excellent in many ways: (1) it shows a beautiful spirit of self-denial; (2) in other loans there may be a doubt as to the safety of your capital or any return therein; here you give to the Lord of All, in Whose hands are the keys of want or plenty; giving, you may have manifold blessings, and withholding, you may even lose what you have. If we remember that our goal is God, can we turn away from His cause?

277. The next generation after Moses and Aaron was ruled by Joshua, who crossed the Jordan and settled the tribes in Palestine. His rule lasted for 25 years, after which there was a period of 320 years when the Israelites had a chequered history. They were not united among themselves, and suffered many reverses at the hands of the Midianites, Amalekites, and other tribes of Palestine. They frequently lapsed into idolatry and deserted the worship of the true God. From time to time a leader appeared among them who assumed dictatorial powers. Acting under a sort of theocratic commission from God, he pointed out their backslidings, reunited them under His banner, and restored, from time to time and place to place, the power of Israel. These dictators are called Judges in the English translation of the Old Testament. The last of their line was Samuel, who marks the transition towards the line of Kings on the one hand and of the later Prophets on the other. He may be dated approximately about the 11th century B.C.

They said to a Prophet ²⁷⁸.
 (That was) among them :
 " Appoint for us a King, that we
 May fight in the cause of God."
 He said : " Is it not possible, ²⁷⁹
 If ye were commanded
 To fight, that ye
 Will not fight?" They said :
 " How could we refuse
 To fight in the cause of God,
 Seeing that we were turned out
 Of our homes and our families ?"
 But when they were commanded
 To fight, they turned back,
 Except a small band
 Among them. But God
 Has full knowledge of those
 Who do wrong.

247. Their Prophet said to them :
 " God hath appointed
 Tālūt ²⁸⁰ as king over you."
 They said : " How can he
 Exercise authority over us
 When we are better fitted
 Than he to exercise authority,
 And he is not even gifted
 With wealth in abundance ?"
 He said : " God hath
 Chosen him above you,
 And hath gifted him
 Abundantly with knowledge
 And bodily prowess : God

لَا قَالُوا لَنَبِيٍّ
 لَهُمْ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ
 اللَّهِ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ
 الْقِتَالُ أَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا
 قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
 وَقَدْ أَخْرَجَنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَاؤُنَا
 فَلَنَا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ
 تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ
 وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ○

٢٤٧- وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا
 قَالُوا أَلَيْكَ يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا
 وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ
 وَلَمْ يُوْتِ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ
 قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ
 وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ

278. This was Samuel. In his time Israel had suffered from much corruption within and many reverses without. The Philistines had made a great attack and defeated Israel with great slaughter. The Israelites, instead of relying on Faith and their own valour and cohesion, brought out their most sacred possession, the Ark of the Covenant, to help them in the fight. But the enemy captured it, carried it away, and retained it for seven months. The Israelites forgot that wickedness cannot screen itself behind a sacred relic. Nor can a sacred relic help the enemies of faith. The enemy found that the Ark brought nothing but misfortune for themselves, and were glad to abandon it. It apparently remained twenty years in the village (*qarya*) of Ya'ārim (Kirjath-jearim) : I. Samuel, vii. 2. Meanwhile the peoples pressed Samuel to appoint them a king. They thought that a king would cure all their ills, whereas what was wanting was a spirit of union and discipline and a readiness on their part to fight in the cause of God.

279. Samuel knew as a Prophet that the people were fickle and only wanted to cover their own want of union and true spirit by asking for a king. They replied with spirit in words, but when it came to action they failed. They hid themselves in caves and rocks, or ran away, and even those who remained "followed him trembling" : I. Samuel, xiii. 6-7.

280. Tālūt is the Arabic name for Saul, who was tall and handsome, but belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel. His worldly belongings were slender, and it was when he went out to search for some asses which had been lost from his father's house that he met Samuel and was anointed king by him. The people's fickleness appeared immediately he was named. They raised all sorts of petty objections to him. The chief consideration in their minds was selfishness : each one wanted to be leader and king himself, instead of desiring sincerely the good of the people as a whole, as a leader should do.

Granteth His authority to whom
He pleaseth. God careth
For all, and He knoweth
All things."

248. And (further) their Prophet
Said to them : " A Sign
Of his authority
Is that there shall come
To you the Ark of the Covenant,²⁸¹
With (an assurance) therein
Of security²⁸² from your Lord,
And the relics left
By the family of Moses
And the family of Aaron,
Carried by angels.²⁸³
In this is a Symbol
For you if ye indeed
Have faith."

SECTION 33.

249. ~~W~~hen Tālūt set forth
With the armies, he said :²⁸⁴
" God will test you
At the stream : if any
Drinks of its water,
He goes not with my army :
Only those who taste not
Of it go with me :
A mere sip out of the hand
Is excused." But they all
Drank of it, except a few.
When they crossed the river,—
He and the faithful ones with him,—
They said : " This day²⁸⁵
We cannot cope
With Goliath and his forces."

وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَن يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٢٤٨- وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ
إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ
أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ
مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَى
وَالْهَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُم
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۝

٢٤٩- فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ
قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ
فَمَن شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي
وَمَن لَّمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي
إِلَّا مَنِ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ
فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ
فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ
هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ
قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ

281. *Ark of the Covenant* : *Tābūt* : a chest of acacia wood covered and lined with pure gold, about 5ft. x 3ft. x 3ft. See Exod. xxv. 10-22. It was to contain the "testimony of God", or the Ten Commandments engraved on stone, with relics of Moses and Aaron. Its Gold lid was to be the "Mercy Seat", with two cherubims of beaten gold, with wings outstretched. This was a sacred possession to Israel. It was lost to the enemy in the early part of Samuel's ministry : see n. 278 to ii. 246 : when it came back, it remained in a village for twenty years, and was apparently taken to the capital when kingship was instituted. It thus became a symbol of unity and authority.

282. *Security* : *sakīna* = safety, tranquillity, peace. Later Jewish writings use the same word for a symbol of God's Glory in the Tabernacle or tent in which the Ark was kept, or in the Temple when it was built by Solomon.

283. *Carried by angels* : these words refer to the *Tābūt* or Ark : the cherubims with outstretched wings on the lid may well be supposed to carry the security or peace which the Ark symbolised.

284. A Commander is hampered by a large force if it is not in perfect discipline and does not whole-heartedly believe in its Commander. He must get rid of all the doubtful ones, as did Gideon before Saul, and Henry V. in Shakespeare's story long afterwards. Saul used the same test as Gideon : he gave a certain order when crossing a stream : the greater part disobeyed, and were sent back. Gideon's story will be found in Judges, vii. 2-7.

285. Even in the small band that remained faithful, there were some who were appalled by the number of the enemy when they met him face to face, and saw the size and strength of the enemy Commander, the giant Goliath (*Jālūt*). But there was a very small band who were determined to face all odds because they had perfect confidence in God and in the cause for which they were fighting. They were for making a firm stand and seeking God's help. Of that number was David : see next note.

But those who were convinced
That they must meet God,
Said: "How oft, by God's will,
Hath a small force
Vanquished a big one?
God is with those
Who steadfastly persevere.'

250. When they advanced
To meet Goliath and his forces,
They prayed: "Our Lord!
Pour out constancy on us
And make our steps firm:
Help us against those
That reject faith."

251. By God's will,
They routed them;
And David ²⁸⁵ slew Goliath;
And God gave him
Power and wisdom
And taught him
Whatever (else) He willed. ²⁸⁷
And did not God
Check one set of people
By means of another,
The earth would indeed
Be full of mischief:
But God is full of bounty
To all the worlds. ²⁸⁸

252. These are the Signs
Of God: We rehearse them
2 To thee in truth: verily
30 Thou art one of the Apostles.

قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلِقُوا اللَّهَ
كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ
غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ○

٢٥٠- وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا

وَتَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا

وَاصْصِرْنَا عَلَى الْجُومِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

٢٥١- فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ

وَاتَّاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ

وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مَتَا يَشَاءُ

وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ

لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ

وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٢٥٢- تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ تَنْتَلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ

وَأَنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ○

286. Note how the whole story is compressed into a few words as regards narration, but its spiritual lessons are dwelt upon from many points of view. The Old Testament is mainly interested in the narrative, which is full of detail, but says little about the universal truths of which every true story is a parable. The Qur-ān assumes the story, but tells the parable.

David was a raw youth, with no arms or armour. He was not known even in the Israelite camp and the giant Goliath mocked him. Even David's own elder brother chid him for deserting his sheep, for he was a poor shepherd lad to outward appearance, but his faith had made him more than a match for the Philistine hosts. When Saul offered his own armour and arms to David, the young hero declined, as he had not tried them, while his shepherd's sling and staff were his well-tried implements. He picked up five smooth pebbles on the spot from the stream, and used his sling to such effect that he knocked down Goliath. He then used Goliath's own sword to slay him. There was consternation in the Philistine army: they broke and fled, and were pursued and cut to pieces.

Apart from the main lesson that if we would preserve our national 'existence and our faith it is our duty to fight with courage and firmness, there are other lessons in David's story: (1) numbers do not count, but faith, determination, and the blessing of God; (2) size and strength are of no avail against truth, courage, and careful planning; (3) the hero tries his own weapons, and those that are available to him at the time and place, even though people may laugh at him; (4) if God is with us, the enemy's weapon may become an instrument of his own destruction; (5) personality conquers all dangers, and puts heart into our own wavering friends; (6) pure faith brings God's reward, which may take many forms; in David's case it was Power, Wisdom, and other gifts: see next note.

287. David was not only a shepherd, a warrior, a king, a wise man, and a prophet, but was also endowed with the gifts of poetry and music. His Psalms (*zabūr*) are still extant.

288. God's plan is universal. He loves and protects *all* His creatures and His bounties are for all worlds (i. 2n.) To protect one He may have to check another, but we must never lose faith that His love is for all in boundless measure.

253. Whose apostles

We endowed with gifts,
Some above others :²⁸⁹
To one of them God spoke ;²⁹⁰
Others He raised
To degrees (of honour) ;²⁹¹
To Jesus the son of Mary
We gave Clear (Signs),²⁹²
And strengthened him
With the holy spirit.
If God had so willed,
Succeeding generations
Would not have fought
Among each other, after
Clear (Signs) had come to them,
But they (chose) to wrangle,
Some believing and others
Rejecting. If God had so willed,
They would not have fought
Each other ; but God
Fulfilleth His plan.²⁹³

٢٥٣- تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ
فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ
كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ
وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ
وَإَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
مَا اقْتَتَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَلَكِنْ
اِخْتَلَفُوا فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ آمَنَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ
كَفَرَ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلُوا
وَلَكِنْ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ ۝

الرُّسُلُ
فَضَّلْنَا

۝

C. 52.—Who can describe the nature of God ?

(u 254-283) The Living, the Eternal : His Throne

Extends over worlds and worlds
That no imagination can compass.
His truth is clear as daylight : how
Can compulsion advance religion ?
The keys of Life, and Death, and the mysteries
Of everything around us, are in His hands
Our duty then is to seek the path
Of goodness, kindness, upright
Conduct and Charity,—to grasp

289 Different gifts and different modes of procedure are prescribed to God's Apostles in different ages, and perhaps their degrees are different though it is not for us mortals, with our imperfect knowledge, to make any difference between one and another of God's Apostles (u 136) As this winds up the argument about fighting, three illustrations are given from the past, how it affected God's Messengers To Moses God spoke in clouds of glory he led his men for forty years through the wilderness, mainly fighting against the unbelief of his own people, he organised them to fight with the sword for Palestine, but was raised to God's mercy before his enterprise ripened, and it fell to Joshua to carry out his plan. David, though a mere shepherd boy, was chosen by God He overthrew the greatest warrior of his time, became a king, and waged successful wars, being also a prophet, a poet, and a musician Jesus was "strengthened with the holy spirit" he was given no weapons to fight, and his mission was of a more limited character In Muhammad's mission these and other characters were combined Gentler than Jesus, he organised on a vaster scale than Moses, and from Medina he ruled and gave laws, and the Qur-ān has a vaster scope than the Psalms of David

290. Moses : see note above.

"291 There is a twofold sense they were raised to high posts of honour, and they rose by degrees. I take the reference to be to David,

"292 Cf u 87 See n 401 to u 62

"293 If some power of choice was to be given to man, his selfishness inevitably caused divisions It must not be supposed that it frustrates God's Plan He carries it out as He will.

At no advantage from a brother's need,
To stand by the word that is pledged,
To bear true witness, and remove all cause
Of misunderstandings in our dealings
As between man and man.

15

SECTION 34.

254. O ye who believe !
Spend out of (the bounties) ²⁹⁴
We have provided for you,
Before the Day comes
When no bargaining
(Will avail), nor friendship
Nor intercession. ²⁹⁵
Those who reject Faith—they
Are the wrong-doers.

255. God ! There is no god
But He,—the Living,
The Self-subsisting, Eternal. ²⁹⁶
No slumber can seize Him
Nor sleep. His are all things
In the heavens and on earth.
Who is there can intercede
In His presence except
As He permitteth ? He knoweth
What (appeareth to His creatures

۲۵۴- يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا
اَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ
مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّآتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَاَ بَیْعَةٌ فِیْهِ
وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ
وَالْكَافِرُوْنَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ
۲۵۵- اَللّٰهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ
الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ
لَا تَاْخُذُهٗ سِنَةٌ وَّلَا نَوْمٌ
لَّهٗ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِی الْاَرْضِ
مَنْ ذَا الَّذِیْ يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهٗ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِهٖ

294. Spend, i.e., give away in charity, or employ in good works, but do not hoard. Good works would in Islam include everything that advances the good of one that is in need, whether a neighbour or a stranger, or that advances the good of the community, or even the good of the person himself to whom God has given the bounty. But it must be real good and there should be no admixture of baser motives, such as vainglory, or false indulgence, or encouragement of idleness, or playing off one person against another. The bounties include mental and spiritual gifts as well as wealth and material gifts.

295. Cf. ii. 123 and ii. 48.

296. This is the *Āyat-ul-Kursī*, the "Verse of the Throne". Who can translate its glorious meaning, or reproduce the rhythm of its well-chosen and comprehensive words? Even in the original Arabic the meaning seems to be greater than can be expressed in words.

The attributes of God are so different from anything we know in our present world that we have to be content with understanding that the only fit word by which we can name Him is "He",—the pronoun standing for His name. His name—God or Allāh—is sometimes misused and applied to other beings or things; and we must emphatically repudiate any idea or suggestion that there can be any compeer of God, the one true living God. He lives, but His life is self-subsisting and eternal: it does not depend upon other beings and is not limited to time and space. Perhaps the attribute of *Qayyūm* includes not only the idea of "Self-subsisting" but also the idea of "Keeping up and maintaining all life". His life being the source and constant support of all derived forms of life. Perfect life is perfect activity, in contrast to the imperfect life which we see around us, which is not only subject to death but to the need for rest or slowed-down activity, (something which is between activity and sleep, for which I in common with other translators have used the word "slumber") and the need for full sleep itself. But God has no need for rest or sleep. His activity, like His life, is perfect and self-subsisting. Contrast with this the expression used in Psalms lxxviii. 65: "Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine."

As) Before or After
Or Behind them.²⁹⁷
Nor shall they compass
Aught of His knowledge
Except as He willeth.
His Throne doth extend²⁹⁸
Over the heavens
And the earth, and He feeleth
No fatigue in guarding
And preserving them.²⁹⁹
For He is the Most High,
The Supreme (in glory).

256. **Yet** there be no compulsion³⁰⁰
In religion : Truth stands out
Clear from Error : whoever
Rejects Evil and believes
In God hath grasped
The most trustworthy
Hand-hold, that never breaks.³⁰¹
And God heareth
And knoweth all things.

257. God is the Protector
Of those who have faith :

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ
وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ
إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ
وَبِهِ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمُوتُ وَالْأَرْضُ
وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا
وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

ر-٢٥٦- لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ
قَدْ بُيِّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ
فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمَرْ بِاللَّهِ
فَقَدْ اسْتَقْسَمَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى لَا انْفِصَامَ
لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ
ر-٢٥٧- اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

297. After we realise that His Life is absolute Life, His Being is absolute Being, while others are contingent and evanescent, our ideas of heaven and earth vanish like shadows. What is behind that shadow is He. Such reality as our heavens and our earth possess is a reflection of His absolute Reality. The pantheist places the wrong accent when he says that everything is He. The truth is better expressed when we say that everything is His. How then can any creatures stand before Him as of right, and claim to intercede for a fellow-creature? In the first place both are His, and He cares as much for one as for the other. In the second place, they are both dependent on His will and command. But He in His Wisdom and Plan may grade his creatures and give one superiority over another. Then by His will and permission such a one may intercede or help according to the laws and duties laid on him. God's knowledge is absolute, and is not conditioned by Time or Space. To us, His creatures, these conditions always apply. His knowledge and our knowledge are therefore in different categories, and our knowledge only gets some reflection of Reality when it accords with His Will and Plan.

298. *Throne* : Seat, power, knowledge, symbol of authority. In our thoughts we exhaust everything when we say "the heavens and the earth". Well, then, in everything is the working of God's power and will, and authority. Everything of course includes spiritual things as well as things of sense. Cf. Wordsworth's fine outburst in "Tintern Abbey": "Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, And the round ocean and the living air, And in the blue sky, and in the mind of man : A motion and a spirit that impels all thinking things, all objects of all thought, And rolls through all things."

299. A life of activity that is imperfect or relative would not only need rest for carrying on its own activities, but would be in need of double rest when it has to look after and guard, or cherish, or help other activities. In contrast with this is the Absolute Life, which is free from any such need or contingency. For it is supreme above anything that we can conceive.

300. Compulsion is incompatible with religion : because (1) religion depends upon faith and will, and these would be meaningless if induced by force ; (2) Truth and Error have been so clearly shown up by the mercy of God that there should be no doubt in the minds of any persons of good-will as to the fundamentals of faith ; (3) God's protection is continuous, and His Plan is always to lead us from the depths of darkness into the clearest light.

301. *Hand-hold* : something which the hands can grasp for safety in a moment of danger. It may be a loop or a handle, or anchor. If it is without flaw, so that there is no danger of breaking, our safety is absolutely assured so long as we hold fast to it. Our safety then depends on our own will and faith : God's help and protection will always be unfailing if we hold firmly to God and trust in Him.

From the depths of darkness
He will lead them forth
Into light. Of those
Who reject faith the patrons
Are the Evil Ones : from light
They will lead them forth
Into the depths of darkness.
They will be Companions
Of the fire, to dwell therein
(For ever).

SECTION 35.

258. Fast thou not
Turned thy vision to one
Who disputed with Abraham³⁰²
About his Lord, because
God had granted him
Power? Abraham said :
"My Lord is He Who
Giveth life and death."
He said : "I give life and death."
Said Abraham : "But it is God
That causeth the sun
To rise from the East :
Do thou then cause him
To rise from the West."
Thus was he confounded
Who (in arrogance) rejected
Faith. Nor doth God
Give guidance
To a people unjust.³⁰³

259. Or (take) the similitude
Of one who passed

يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ
يُخْرِجُونَهُمْ مِنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ
أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
هُم فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ٥

٢٥٨- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي
رَبِّهِ أَنْ أَنَسَّهُ اللَّهُ الْمَلَكُ
إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ
قَالَ أَنَا أَنُحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ
قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَلَن تَأْتِي
بِالْشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ
فَأَتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ
فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥

٢٥٩- أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ

302. The three verses 258-260 have been the subject of much controversy as to the exact meaning to be attached to the incidents and the precise persons alluded to, whose names are not mentioned. M. M. A's learned notes give some indication of the points at issue. In such matters, where the Qur-ān has given no names and the Holy Apostle has himself given no indication, it seems to me useless to speculate, and still worse to put forward positive opinions. In questions of learning, speculations are often interesting. But it seems to me that the meaning of the Qur-ān is so wide and universal that we are in danger of missing the real and eternal meaning if we go on disputing about minor points. All three incidents are such as may happen again and again in any prophet's life-time, and be seen in impersonal vision at any time. Here they are connected with Muṣṭafā's vision as shown by the opening words of verse 258.

303. The first point illustrated is the pride of power, and the impotence of human power as against God's power. The person who disputed with Abraham may have been Nimrod or some ruler in Babylonia, or indeed elsewhere. I name Babylonia as it was the original home of Abraham (Ur of the Chaldees), and Babylon prided herself on her arts and sciences in the ancient world. Science can do many wonderful things : it could then ; it can now. But the mystery of Life baffled science then, as it continues to baffle science now, after many centuries of progress. Abraham had faith, and referred back everything to the true Cause of Causes. A sceptical ruler might jestingly say : "I have the power of life and death." A man of science might say : "We have investigated the laws of life and death." Different kinds of powers lie in the hands of kings and men of knowledge. The claim in both cases is true in a very limited sense. But Abraham confounded the claimer by going back to fundamentals. "If you had the ultimate power, why could you not make the sun rise from the West?"

By a hamlet, all in ruins ³⁰⁴
 To its roofs. He said :
 " Oh ! how shall God
 Bring it (ever) to life,
 After (this) its death ? "
 But God caused him
 To die for a hundred years,
 Then raised him up (again).
 He said : " How long
 Didst thou tarry (thus) ? "
 He said : " (Perhaps) a day
 Or part of a day." He said :
 " Nay, thou hast tarried
 Thus a hundred years ;
 But look at thy food
 And thy drink ; they show
 No signs of age ; and look
 At thy donkey : and that
 We may make of thee
 A Sign unto the people,
 Look further at the bones,
 How We bring them together
 And clothe them with flesh ! " ³⁰⁵
 When this was shown clearly
 To him, he said : " I know
 That God hath power
 Over all things."

260. Behold ! Abraham said :
 " My Lord ! Show me how
 Thou givest life to the dead." ³⁰⁵
 He said : " Dost thou not
 Then believe ? " He said :
 " Yea ! but to satisfy

وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا
 قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا
 فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ
 ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ
 قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ
 قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ
 فَانْظُرْ إِلَى طَعَامِكَ
 وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ
 وَانْظُرْ إِلَى حِمَارِكَ
 وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ
 وَانْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنْشِزُهَا
 ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا
 فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

٢٦٠- وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ
 تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى قَالَ أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ
 قَالَ بَلَى وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبِي

304. This incident is referred variously ; (1) to Ezekiel's vision of dry bones (Ezekiel, xxxvii. 1-10) ; (2) to Nehemiah's visit to Jerusalem in ruins after the Captivity, and to its rebuilding (Nehemiah, i. 12-20) ; and (3) to 'Uzair, or Ezra, or Esdras, the scribe, priest, and reformer, who was sent by the Persian King after the Captivity to Jerusalem, and about whom there are many Jewish legends. As to (1), there are only four words in this verse about bones. As to (2) and (3), there is nothing specific to connect this verse with either. The wording is perfectly general, and we must understand it as general. I think it does refer not only to individual, but to national, death and resurrection.

305. A man is in despair when he sees the destruction of a whole people, city, or civilisation. But God can cause resurrection, as He has done many times in history, and as He will do at the final Resurrection. Time is nothing before God. The doubter thinks that he has been dead or "tarried thus" a day or less when the period has been a century. On the other hand, the food and drink which he left behind is intact, and as fresh as it was when he left it. But the donkey is not only dead, but nothing but bones is left of it. And before the man's eyes, the bones are reunited, clothed, with flesh and blood, and restored to life. Moral : (1) Time is nothing to God ; (2) It affects different things in different ways ; (3) The keys of life and death are in God's hands ; (4) Man's power is nothing ; his faith should be in God.

306. Verse 258, we saw, illustrated God's power over Life and Death, contrasted with man's vain boasts or imaginings. Verse 259 illustrated how Time is immaterial to God's working ; things, individuals and nations are subject to laws of life and death, which are under God's complete control, however much we may be misled by appearances. Now in Verse 260 we are shown the power of wisdom and love : if man can tame birds so that they know him and fly to him, how much more will God's creatures obey His call at the Resurrection ?

My own understanding." ³⁰⁷
 He said : " Take four birds ;
 Tame them to turn to thee ;
 Put a portion ³⁰⁸ of them
 On every hill, and call to them :
 They will come to thee
 (Flying) with speed.
 Then know that God
 Is Exalted in Power, Wise."

SECTION 36.

261. The parable of those
 Who spend their substance
 In the way of God is that
 Of a grain of corn : it groweth
 Seven ears, and each ear
 Hath a hundred grains.
 God giveth manifold increase
 To whom He pleaseth :
 And God careth for all
 And He knoweth all things.
262. Those who spend
 Their substance in the cause
 Of God, and follow not up
 Their gifts with reminders
 Of their generosity
 Or with injury,—for them
 Their reward is with their Lord :
 On them shall be no fear,
 Nor shall they grieve.
263. Kind words ³⁰⁹
 And the covering of faults

قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِنَ الطَّيْرِ
 فَصْرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ
 ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلَى كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا
 ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا
 وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

٢٦١- مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ
 فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَتَتْ سَنَةً
 سَابِلَةٍ فِي كُلِّ سَنَابِلَةٍ
 مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضَوِّفُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ
 وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٢٦٢- الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ
 اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا
 مَنًّا وَلَا أَذًى ۖ
 لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
 وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

٢٦٣- قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ

307. Abraham had complete faith in God's power, but he wanted, with God's permission, to give an explanation of that faith to his own heart and mind. Where I have translated "satisfy my own understanding," the literal translation would be "satisfy my own heart".

308. A *portion* of them : *Juz-an*. The received Commentators understand this to mean that the birds were to be cut up and pieces of them were to be put on the hills. The cutting up or killing is not mentioned, but they say that it is implied by an ellipsis, as the question is how God gives life to the dead. Of the modern Muslim Commentators, M. P. is non-committal, but H. G. S. and M. M. A. understand that the birds were not killed, but that a "portion" here means a unit, single birds were placed on hills, and they flew to the one who tamed them. This last view commends itself to me, as the cutting up of the birds to pieces is nowhere mentioned, unless we understand the word for "taming" in an unusual and almost impossible sense.

309. A very high standard is set for charity. (1) It must be in the way of God. (2) It must expect no reward in this world. (3) It must not be followed by references or reminders to the act of charity. (4) Still less should any annoyance or injury be caused to the recipient, e.g., by boasting that the giver relieved the person in the hour of need. Indeed, the kindness and the spirit which turns a blind eye to other people's faults or short-comings is the essence of charity : these things are better than charity if charity is spoilt by tricks that do harm. At the same time, while no reward is to be expected, there is abundant reward from God—material, moral, and spiritual—according to His own good pleasure and plan. If we spend in the way of God, it is not as if God was in need of our charity. On the contrary our short-comings are so great that we require His utmost forbearance before any good that we can do can merit His praise or reward. Our motives are so mixed that our best may really be very poor if judged by a very strict standard.

Are better than charity
Followed by injury.
God is Free of all wants,
And He is most Forbearing.

خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ تَتَّبِعُهَا آذَى
وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ ٥

264. O ye who believe !
Cancel not your charity
By reminders of your generosity
Or by injury,—like those
Who spend their substance
To be seen of men,
But believe neither
In God nor in the Last Day.³¹⁰
They are in Parable like a hard,
Barren rock, on which
Is a little soil : on it
Falls heavy rain,
Which leaves it
(Just) a bare stone.
They will be able to do nothing
With aught they have earned.
And God guideth not
Those who reject faith.

٢٦٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْآذَى
كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِثَاءَ النَّاسِ
وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
فَتُكَلِّهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ
عَلَيْهِ تَرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتُكَرُّهُ صَلْدَةٌ
لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ
وَمَا كَسَبُوا
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ٥

265. And the likeness of those
Who spend their substance,
Seeking to please God
And to strengthen their souls,
Is as a garden, high
And fertile . heavy rain³¹¹
Falls on it but makes it yield
A double increase
Of harvest, and if it receives not
Heavy rain, light moisture
Sufficeth it. God seeth well
Whatever ye do.

٢٦٥- وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ
ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَتَثْبِيْتًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ
أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَاتَتْ أَكْثَارًا ضِعْفَيْنِ
فَإِنْ لَمْ يُمْسِكْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلَتْ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ٥

310. False charity, "to be seen of men", is really no charity. It is worse, for it betokens a disbelief in God and the Hereafter. "God seeth well whatever ye do" (ii. 265). It is compared to a hard, barren rock on which by chance has fallen a little soil. Good rain, which renders fertile soil more fruitful, washes away the little soil which this rock had, and exposes its nakedness. What good can hypocrites derive even from the little wealth they may have amassed?

311. True charity is like a field with good soil on a high situation. It catches good showers of rain, the moisture penetrates the soil, and yet its elevated situation keeps it well-drained; and healthy favourable conditions increase its output enormously. But supposing even that the rain is not abundant, it catches dew and makes the most of any little moisture it can get, and that is sufficient for it. So a man of true charity is spiritually healthy; he is best situated to attract the bounties of God, which he does not hoard selfishly but circulates freely. In lean times he still produces good works, and is content with what he has. He looks to God's pleasure and the strengthening of his own soul.

266. Does any of you wish
That he should have a garden ³¹²
With date-palms and vines
And streams flowing
Underneath, and all kinds
Of fruit, while he is stricken.
With old age, and his children
Are not strong (enough ³¹³
To look after themselves)—
That it should be caught
In a whirlwind,
With fire therein,
And be burnt up?
Thus doth God make clear
To you (His) Signs;
That ye may consider.

٢٦٦- أَيُّوْدُ أَحَدِكُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ
مِنْ تَجْنِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ
وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ
فَأَصَابَهَا أَعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ
كَذَلِكَ يَبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٤

SECTION 37.

267. ● ye who believe!
Give of the good things
Which ye have (honourably)
earned, ³¹⁴
And of the fruits of the earth
Which We have produced

٢٦٧- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
انْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ
وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ

312. The truly spiritual nature of charity having been explained in three parables (ii. 261, 264, 265) a fourth parable is now added, explaining its bearing on the whole of our life. Suppose we had a beautiful garden, well-watered and fertile, with delightful views of streams, and a haven of rest for mind and body; suppose old age were creeping in on us, and our children were either too young to look after themselves or too feeble in health; how should we feel if a sudden whirlwind came with lightning or fire in its train, and burnt it up, thus blasting the whole of our hopes for the present and for the future, and destroying the result of all our labour and savings in the past? Well, this life of ours is a probation. We may work hard, we may save, we may have good luck. We may make ourselves a goodly pleasure, and have ample means of support for ourselves and our children. A great whirlwind charged with lightning and fire comes and burns up the whole show. We are too old to begin again: our children are too young or feeble to help us to repair the mischief. Our chance is lost, because we did not provide against such a contingency. The whirlwind is the "wrath to come": the provision against it is a life of true charity and righteousness, which is the only source of true and lasting happiness in this world and the next. Without it we are subject to all the vicissitudes of this uncertain life. We may even spoil our so-called "charity" by insisting on the obligation which others owe to us or by doing some harm, because our motives are not pure.

313. *Not strong (enough)*: *dhu'afā-u*: literally weak, decrepit, infirm, possibly referring to both health and will or character.

314. According to the English proverb "Charity covers a multitude of sins". Such a sentiment is strongly disapproved in Islam. Charity has value only if (1) something good and valuable is given, (2) which has been honourably earned or acquired by the giver, or (3) which is produced in nature and can be referred to as a bounty of God. (1) may include such things as are of use and value to others though they may be of less use to us or superfluous to us on account of our having acquired something more suitable for our station in life; for example, discarded clothes, or an old horse or a used motor car; but if the horse is vicious, or the car engine so far gone that it is dangerous to use, then the gift is worse than useless; it is positively harmful, and the giver is a wrong-doer. (2) applied to fraudulent company-promoters, who earn great credit by giving away in charity some of their ill-gotten gains, or to robbers (even if they call themselves by high-sounding names) who "rob Peter to pay Paul". Islam will have nothing to do with tainted property. Its economic code requires that every gain should be honest and honourable. Even "charity" would not cover or destroy the taint. (3) lays down a test in cases of a doubtful gain. Can we refer to it as a gift of God? Obviously the produce of honest labour or agriculture can be so referred to. In modern commerce and speculation there is much of quite the contrary character, and charity will not cover the taint. Some kind of art, skill, or talent are God-given: it is the highest kind of charity to teach them or share their product. Others are the contrary: they are bad or tainted. In the same way some professions or services may be tainted, if these tend to moral harm.

For you, and do not even aim ³¹⁵
 At getting anything
 Which is bad, in order that
 Out of it ye may give away
 Something, when ye yourselves
 Would not receive it
 Except with closed eyes. ³¹⁶
 And know that God
 Is Free of all wants,
 And Worthy of all praise. ³¹⁷

وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْحَيِّثَ
 مِنْهُ لَتَنفَقُونَ
 وَلَسْتُمْ بِأَخْذِيهِ
 إِلَّا أَنْ تُغِيضُوا فِيهِ
 وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَمِيدٌ ٥

268. The Evil One threatens
 You with poverty
 And bids you to conduct
 Unseemly. God promiseth
 You His forgiveness
 And bounties. ³¹⁸
 And God knoweth all things.

٢٦٨- الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ
 وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ
 وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُمْ مَغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلًا
 وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥

269. He granteth wisdom
 To whom He pleaseth ;
 And he to whom wisdom
 Is granted receiveth
 Indeed a benefit overflowing ;
 But none will grasp the Message
 But men of understanding.

٢٦٩- يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
 وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ
 فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا
 وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ٥

270. And whatever ye spend
 In charity or devotion,
 Be sure God knows it all.
 But the wrong-doers
 Have no helpers.

٢٧٠- وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
 أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ
 وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ٥

315. The preceding note tries to indicate some of the things which are bad or tainted. We should not even think of acquiring them for ourselves, soothing our conscience by the salve that we shall practise charity out of them.

316. Closed eyes imply disgust or connivance because of some feature which we would not openly acknowledge.

317. To dedicate tainted things to God is a dishonour to God, Who is independent of all wants and Who is worthy of all honour and praise.

318. Good and evil draw us opposite ways and by opposite motives, and the contrast is well marked out in charity. When we think of doing some real act of kindness or charity, we are assailed with doubts and fear of impoverishment; but Evil supports any tendency to selfishness, greed, or even to extravagant expenditure for show, or self-indulgence, or unseemly appetites. On the other hand, God draws us on to all that is kind and good, for that way lies the forgiveness of our sins, and greater real prosperity and satisfaction. No kind or generous act ever ruined any one. It is false generosity that is sometimes shown as leading to ruin. As God knows all our motives and cares for all, and has everything in His power, it is obvious which course a wise man will choose. But wisdom is rare, and it is only wisdom that can appreciate true well-being and distinguish it from the false appearance of well-being.

271. If ye disclose (acts ³¹⁹

Of) charity, even so
It is well,
But if ye conceal them,
And make them reach
Those (really) in need,
That is best for you :
It will remove from you
Some of your (stains
Of) evil. And God
Is well acquainted
With what ye do.

٢٧١- إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ

فَنَجْعَلَهَا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا

وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ

فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ

وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝

272. It is not required

Of thee (O Apostle),
To set them on the right path, ³²⁰
But God sets on the right path
Whom He pleaseth.
Whatever of good ye give
Benefits your own souls,
And ye shall only do so
Seeking the "Face" ³²¹
Of God. Whatever good
Ye give, shall be
Rendered back to you,
And ye shall not
Be dealt with unjustly.

٢٧٢- لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا لَهُمْ

وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يُشَاءُ

وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَا تُنْفِسْكُمْ

وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ

إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ

وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ

يُؤْتِ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ۝

273. (Charity is) for those

In need, who, in God's cause, ³²²
Are restricted (from travel),
And cannot move about

٢٧٣- لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ

أُخْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ

319. It is better to seek no publicity in charity. But if it is known there is no harm. If it is for public purposes, it must necessarily be known, and a pedantic show of concealment may itself be a fault. The harm of publicity lies in motives of ostentation. We can better reach the really deserving poor by quietly seeking for them. The spiritual benefit enures to our own souls, provided our motives are pure, and we are really seeking the good pleasure of God.

320. In connection with charity this means that we must relieve those really in need, whether they are good or bad, on the right path or not, Muslims or otherwise. It is not for us to judge in these matters. God will give light according to His wisdom. Incidentally it adds a further meaning to the command, "Let there be no compulsion in religion" (ii. 256). For compulsion may not only be by force, but by economic necessity. In matters of religion we must not even compel by a bribe of charity. The chief motive in charity should be God's pleasure and our own spiritual good. This was addressed in the first instance to Muṣṭafā in Medina, but it is of universal application.

321. See note to ii. 112. *Wajh* means, literally, face, countenance; hence, favour, glory, Self, Presence.

322. Indiscriminate acts of so-called charity are condemned as they may do more harm than good (see ii. 262). The real beneficiaries of charity are here indicated. They must be in want. And the want must be due to some honourable cause. For example, they may be doing some unpaid service such as teaching, or acquiring knowledge or skill, or be in exile for their faith, or in other ways be prevented from seeking employment or doing strenuous work. "God's cause" must not be narrowly interpreted. All sincere and real service to humanity comes within the definition, as well as actual devotion to religion or to the righteous Imām. Such men do not beg from door to door. It is the duty of those who are well-to-do, or of the Public Purse, to find them out.

- 15 In the land, seeking
(For trade or work).
The ignorant man thinks,
Because of their modesty,
That they are free from want.
Thou shalt know them
By their (unfailing) mark :
They beg not importunately
From all and sundry.
And whatever of good
Ye give, be assured
God knoweth it well.

ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ
يَحْسِبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ
تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ
لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ
يَعْلَمَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ۝

SECTION 38.

274. Those who (in charity) ³²³

Spend of their goods
By night and by day,
In secret and in public,
Have their reward
With their Lord :
On them shall be no fear,
Nor shall they grieve.

۲۷۴-الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِالْإِيلِ
وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً
فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

275. Those who devour usury ³²⁴

Will not stand except
As stands one whom
The Evil One by his touch
Hath driven to madness. ³²⁵
That is because they say :
"Trade is like usury," ³²⁶
But God hath permitted trade

۲۷۵-الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ
إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ
مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ
مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ

323. We recapitulate the beauty of charity (i.e., unselfish giving of one's self or one's goods) before we come to its opposite, i.e., the selfish grasping greed of usury against those in need or distress. Charity instead of impoverishing you will enrich you: you will have more happiness and less fear. Contrast it with what follows,—the degradation of the grasping usurer.

324. Usury is condemned and prohibited in the strongest possible terms. There can be no question about the prohibition. When we come to the definition of Usury there is room for difference of opinion. Hadrhat 'Umar, according to Ibn Kathir, felt some difficulty in the matter, as the Apostle left this world before the details of the question were settled. This was one of the three questions on which he wished he had had more light from the Apostle, the other two being *Khilāfat* and *Kalālat* (see iv. 12. n. 518). Our 'Ulamā, ancient and modern, have worked out a great body of literature on Usury, based mainly on economic conditions as they existed at the rise of Islam. I agree with them on the main principles, but respectfully differ from them on the definition of Usury. As this subject is highly controversial, I shall discuss it, not in this Commentary but on a suitable occasion elsewhere. The definition I would accept would be: undue profit made, not in the way of legitimate trade, out of loans of gold and silver, and necessary articles of food, such as wheat, barley, dates, and salt (according to the list mentioned by the Holy Apostle himself). My definition would include profiteering of all kinds, but exclude economic credit, the creature of modern banking and finance.

325. An apt simile: whereas legitimate trade or industry increases the prosperity and stability of men and nations, a dependence on Usury would merely encourage a race of idlers, cruel blood-suckers, and worthless fellows who do not know their own good and are therefore akin to madmen.

326. The sharp opposition between legitimate trade and usury supports my definition in the last note but one. *Bai'* (literary, Sale or Barter) is also used more generally for trade and commerce, and various kinds of transactions.

And forbidden usury.
Those who after receiving
Direction from their Lord,
Desist, shall be pardoned
For the past ; their case
Is for God (to judge) ;
But those who repeat
(The offence) are Companions
Of the Fire : they will
Abide therein (for ever).

276. God will deprive
Usury of all blessing,
But will give increase
For deeds of charity :
For He loveth not
Creatures ungrateful
And wicked.
277. Those who believe,
And do deeds of righteousness,
And establish regular prayers
And regular charity,
Will have their reward
With their Lord :
On them shall be no fear,
Nor shall they grieve.³²⁷
278. ● ye who believe !
Fear God, and give up
What remains of your demand
For usury, if ye are
Indeed believers.
279. If ye do it not,
Take notice of war³²⁸
From God and His Apostle :
But if ye turn back,
Ye shall have
Your capital sums :
Deal not unjustly,
And ye shall not
Be dealt with unjustly.

الرِّبَا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ
فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ
وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

٢٧٦- يَنْصَحُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا
وَيُرِي الصَّدَقَاتِ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ ○

٢٧٧- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ
لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٢٧٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٢٧٩- فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ
مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ
فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ
لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ○

327. The contrast between charity and unlawful grasping of wealth began at ii. 274, where this phrase occurs as a theme. Here the theme finishes with the same phrase. The following four verses refer to further concessions on behalf of debtors, as creditors are asked to (a) give up even claims arising out of the past on account of usury, and (b) to give time for payment of capital if necessary, or (c) to write off the debt altogether as an act of charity.

328. This is not war for opinions, but an ultimatum of war for the liberation of debtors unjustly dealt with and oppressed.

280. If the debtor is
In a difficulty,
Grant him time
Till it is easy
For him to repay.
But if ye remit it
By way of charity,
That is best for you
If ye only knew.

٢٨٠- وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ
فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ
وَأَنْ تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ٥

281. And fear the Day
When ye shall be
Brought back to God.
Then shall every soul
Be paid what it earned,
And none shall be
Dealt with unjustly.

٢٨١- وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا
تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ
تُكْفَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ٦

SECTION 39.

282. ● ye who believe!
When ye deal with each other,
In transactions involving
Future obligations
In a fixed period of time,
Reduce them to writing.³²⁹
Let a scribe write down
Faithfully as between
The parties: let not the scribe
Refuse to write: as God³³⁰
Has taught him,
So let him write.
Let him who incurs
The liability dictate,
But let him fear
His Lord God,
And not diminish
Aught of what he owes.
If the party liable
Is mentally deficient,

٢٨٢- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
إِذَا تَدَايَيْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ
إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ
وَلْيَكْتُب بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ
وَلَا يَأْب كَاتِبٌ
أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ
فَلْيَكْتُبْ
وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ
وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ
وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا
فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا

329. The first part of the verse deals with transactions involving future payment or future consideration, and the second part with transactions in which payment and delivery are made on the spot. Examples of the former are if goods are bought now and payment is promised at a fixed time and place in the future, or if cash is paid now and delivery is contracted for at a fixed time and place in the future. In such cases a written document is recommended, but it is held that the words later on in this verse, that it is "juster . . . more suitable as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts", etc., imply that it is not obligatory in law. Examples of the latter kind—cash payment and delivery on the spot—require no evidence in writing, but apparently oral witnesses to such transactions are recommended.

330. The scribe in such matters assumes a fiduciary capacity: he should therefore remember to act as in the presence of God, with full justice to both parties. The art of writing he should look upon as a gift from God, and he should use it as in His service. In an illiterate population the scribe's position is still more responsible.

Or weak, or unable
Himself to dictate,³³¹
Let his guardian
Dictate faithfully.
And get two witnesses,
Out of your own men,³³²
And if there are not two men,
Then a man and two women,
Such as ye choose,
For witnesses,
So that if one of them errs,
The other can remind her.
The witnesses
Should not refuse
When they are called on
(For evidence).
Disdain not to reduce
To writing (your contract)
For a future period,
Whether it be small
Or big : it is juster
In the sight of God,
More suitable as evidence,
And more convenient
To prevent doubts
Among yourselves .
But if it be a transaction
Which ye carry out
On the spot among yourselves,
There is no blame on you
If ye reduce it not
To writing.
But take witnesses
Whenever ye make
A commercial contract ;
And let neither scribe
Nor witness suffer harm.
If ye do (such harm),
It would be wickedness
In you. So fear God ;
For it is God
That teaches you.
And God is well acquainted
With all things.³³³

أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ
أَنْ يُبَيِّنَ لَهُ فَلَْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ
وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ
مِنْ رَجَالِكُمْ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ
فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ
مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ
أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا
فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى
وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا
وَلَا تَسْتَوُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ
صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلِهِ
ذَلِكَ أَوْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا
إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً
حَاضِرَةً
تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ
فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُبُوهَا
وَاشْهَدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ
وَلَا يُضَارَ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ
وَأَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

331. Possibly the person "mentally deficient, or weak, or unable to dictate", may also be incapable of making a valid contract, and the whole duty would be on his guardian, who again must act in perfect good faith, not only protecting but vigilantly promoting the interests of his ward.

332. It is desirable that the men (or women) who are chosen as witness should be from the circle to which the parties belong, as they would best be able to understand the transaction, and be most easily available if their evidence is required in future.

333. Commercial morality is here taught on the highest plane and yet in the most practical manner, both as regards the bargains to be made, the evidence to be provided, the doubts to be avoided, and the duties and rights of scribes and witnesses. Probity even in worldly matters is to be, not a mere matter of convenience or policy, but a matter of conscience and religious duty. Even our every-day transactions are to be carried out as in the presence of God.

283. If ye are on a journey,
And cannot find
A scribe, a pledge
With possession (may serve
The purpose) ³³⁴
And if one of you
Deposits a thing
On trust with another, ³³⁵
Let the trustee
(Faithfully) discharge
His trust, and let him
Fear his Lord.
Conceal not evidence ;
For whoever conceals it,—
His heart is tainted ³³⁶
With sin. And God
Knoweth all that ye do.

۲۸۳- وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ
وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا
فَرِهْنِ مَقْبُوضَةً
وَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا
فَالْيُؤَدُّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِنَ أَمَانَتَهُ
وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ
وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ
وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ آثِمٌ قَلْبُهُ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ

C. 53.—Our honesty and upright conduct
(ii. 284-286.) Are not mere matters of policy
Or convenience : all our life in this world
Must be lived as in the presence of God.
The finest example of Faith we have
In the Apostle's life : full of faith,
Let us render willing obedience
To God's Will. Our responsibility,
Though great, is not a burden
Greater than we can bear : let us
Pray for God's assistance, and He will help.

SECTION 40.

284. No God belongeth all
That is in the heavens
And on earth. Whether
Ye show what is in your minds
Or conceal it, God
Calleth you to account for it.

۲۸۴- لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ
وَإِنْ تُبَدُّوْا مَا فِيْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ
اَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللّٰهُ

334. A pledge or security stands on its own independent footing, though it is a very convenient form of closing the bargain where the parties cannot trust each other, and cannot get a written agreement with proper witnesses.

335. The law of Deposit implies great trust in the Depositary on the part of the Depositor. The Depositary becomes a trustee, and the doctrine of Trust can be further developed on that basis. The trustee's duty is to guard the interests of the person on whose behalf he holds the trust and to render back the property and accounts when required according to the terms of the trust. This duty again is linked to the sanction of Religion, which requires a higher standard than Law.

336. It sometimes happens that if some inconvenient piece of evidence is destroyed or concealed, we gain a great advantage materially. We are warned not to yield to such a temptation. The concealment of evidence has a serious effect on our own moral and spiritual life, for it taints the very source of higher life, as typified by the heart. The heart is also the seat of our secrets. We are told that the sin will reach our most secret being, though the sin may not be visible or open to the world. Further, the heart is the seat of our affections, and false dealing taints all our affections.

He forgiveth whom He pleaseth,
And punisheth whom He pleaseth.
For God hath power
Over all things.

285. The Apostle believeth
In what hath been revealed
To him from his Lord,
As do the men of faith.
Each one (of them) believeth
In God, His angels,
His books, and His apostles.³³⁷
"We make no distinction (they say)
Between one and another³³⁸
Of His apostles." And they say :
" We hear, and we obey :
(We seek) Thy forgiveness,³³⁹
Our Lord, and to Thee
Is the end of all journeys."

286. On no soul doth God
Place a burden greater
Than it can bear.³⁴⁰
It gets every good that it earns,
And it suffers every ill that it earns.
(Pray :) " Our Lord !
Condemn us not
If we forget or fall
Into error ; our Lord !
Lay not on us a burden
Like that which Thou
Didst lay on those before us ;³⁴¹

فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

٢٨٥- اٰمَنَ الرَّسُوْلُ بِمَا اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِ
مِنْ رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ
كُلٌّ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰئِكَتِهِ
وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
لَا تَفْرِقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْ رُّسُلِهِ
وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَاَطَعْنَا
غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَاِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝

٢٨٦- لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا
لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ
رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا اِنْ كُنَّا
اَوْ اَخْطَاْنَا
رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا
اِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ
عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۝

337. This Sūra started with the question of Faith (ii. 3-4), showed us various aspects of Faith and the denial of Faith, gave us ordinances for the new People of Islam as a community, and now rounds off the argument again with a confession of Faith and of its practical manifestation in conduct. ("we hear and we obey"), and closes on a note of humility, so that we may confess our sins, ask for forgiveness, and pray for God's help and guidance.

338. Cf. ii. 136 and ii. 253, n. 289. It is not for us to make any distinction between one and another of God's apostles: we must honour them all equally, though we know that God in His wisdom sent them with different kinds of mission and gave them different degrees of rank.

339. When our faith and conduct are sincere, we realise how far from perfection we are, and we humbly pray to God for the forgiveness of our sins. We feel that God imposes no burden on us that we cannot bear, and with this realisation in our hearts and in the confession of our lips, we go to Him and ask for His help and guidance.

340. Cf. ii. 233. In that verse the burden was in terms of material wealth; here it is in terms of spiritual duty. Assured by God that He will accept from each soul just such duty as it has the ability to offer, we pray further on for the fulfilment of that promise.

341. We must not be arrogant, and think that because God has granted us His favour and mercy we have no need to exert ourselves, or that we are ourselves superior to those before us. On the contrary, knowing how much they failed, we pray that our burdens should be lightened, and we confess our realisation that we have all the greater need for God's mercy and forgiveness.

And so we end the whole argument of the Sūra with a prayer for God's help, not in our own selfish ends, but in our resolve to uphold God's Truth against all Unbelief.

Our Lord ! lay not on us
A burden greater than we
Have strength to bear.
Blot out our sins,
And grant us forgiveness,
Have mercy on us.
Thou art our Protector ;
Help us against those
Who stand against Faith."

رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحِثْ عَلَيْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ
وَاعْفُ عَنَّا
وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا
وَإِحْمِنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا
فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝



APPENDIX I.

The Abbreviated Letters (*Al-Muqatta'āt*)

Certain Sūras have certain initials prefixed to them, which are called the "Abbreviated Letters." A number of conjectures have been made as to their meaning. Opinions are divided as to the exact meaning of each particular letter or combination of letters, but it is agreed that they have a mystic meaning.

Mystic meaning, not intelligible at first sight, is not inconsistent with the character of the Qur-ān as a "plain book". The book of nature is also a plain book, but how few can fully understand it? Every one can get out of the Qur-ān plain guidance for his life according to his capacity for spiritual understanding. As his capacity grows, so will his understanding grow. The whole Book is a Record for all time. It must necessarily contain truths that only gradually unfold themselves to humanity. Even parables and tales of mystic meaning employ symbolism. The plain man may find the symbolism helpful, as a soldier finds his National Flag helpful. But what proportion of British soldiers or citizens understands the full symbolism of the British Union Jack?

This is not a mystery of the same class as "mysteries" by which we are asked to believe against the dictates of reason. If we are asked to believe that one is three and three is one, we can give no intelligible meaning to the words. If we are asked to believe that certain initials have a meaning which will be understood in the fullness of time or of spiritual development, we are asked to draw upon Faith, but we are not asked to do any violence to our reason.

I shall try to discuss some of the probable meanings of any particular abbreviated letter or set of abbreviated letters on the first occasion on which it appears in the Qur-ān. But it may be desirable here to take a general view of the facts of their occurrence to help us in appreciating the various views which are held about them.

There are 29 letters in the Arabic alphabet (counting *hamza* and *alif* as two letters), and there are 29 Sūras which have abbreviated letters prefixed to them. One of these Sūras (S. xlii.) has two sets of abbreviated letters, but we need not count this Sūra twice. If we take the half of the alphabet, omitting the fraction, we get 14, and this is the number of letters which actually occur in the Muqatta'āt.

The 14 letters, which occur in various combinations, are:—

هـ	ك	ص	ا
ي	ل	ط	ح
م	ع	ر	
ن	ق	س	

The science of phonetics tells us that our vocal sounds arise from the expulsion of the air from the lungs, and the sounds are determined by the way in which the breath passes through the various organs of speech, e.g., the throat (guttural), or the various positions of the tongue to the middle or front of the palate or to the teeth, or the play of the lips. Everyone of these kinds of sounds is represented in these letters.

Let us now examine the combinations.

Three of these letters occur alone, prefixed each to only one Sūra. The letters and Sūras are :—

S. xxxviii.	ص
S. I.	ث
S. lxviii.	ج

The combinations of two letters occur in ten Sūras as shown below. Three of them occur only once each, but the fourth (حم) occurs in seven consecutive Sūras.

S. xx.	طه
S. xxvii.	طس
S. xxxvi.	يس
S. xl.	حم
S. xli.	
S. xlii.	
S. xliii.	
S. xliv.	
S. xlv.	
S. xlii.	

Note that S. xlii. has a double combination of abbreviated letters, one of two, followed by one of three. See under combinations of five.

There are three combinations of three letters each, occurring as follows in 13 Sūras :—

S. ii.	الق
S. iii.	
S. xxix.	
S. xxx.	
S. xxxi.	
S. xxxii.	
S. x.	الق
S. xi.	
S. xii.	
S. xiv.	
S. xv.	
S. xxvi.	طسج
S. xxviii.	

Combinations of four letters occur twice, each only once :—

S. vii.	القص	*Note that the three preceding and the two following Sūras have the triple letters الق.
S. xiii.*	القز	

Finally there remain the combinations of five letters, each of which occurs once only, as follows :—

S. xix.	القصص
S. xlii.	القصصج

In S. xlii. the **ح** and **عَسَى** are put in separate verses. From that point of view they may be considered two separate combinations. The first combination has already been listed under the group of two-letter combinations.

This arithmetical analysis brings certain facts into prominence. I do not know how far they have a bearing on the inner meaning of the *Muqāḥāt*.

The combinations of abbreviated letters that run in a series in consecutive Sūras is noticeable. For example, **ح** occurs in seven consecutive Sūras from xl. to xli. The combination **اَلْ** occurs in six consecutive Sūras, x. to xv., but in one of them (S. xiii.) it is modified to **اَلْ**, connecting it with the **اَلْ** series. The **اَلْ** series covers 6 Sūras. It begins with S. ii. and S. iii., which are practically the beginning of the Qur-ān, and ends with the four consecutive Sūras, xxix. to xxxii. I call S. ii. and S. iii. practically the beginning of the Qur-ān, because S. i. is considered a general introduction to the Qur-ān, and the first Sīpāra is commonly known as **اَلْ**, the first verse of S. ii. The combination **طس** is prefixed to S. xxvi. and S. xxviii., but the intervening S. xxvii. has the combination **طس**, which may be considered a syncopated form, or the three-letter combination **طس** may be considered an extended form of **طس**. Again the question arises: Does the **اَلْ** in **اَلْ**, **ح**, and **طس**, stand for the same signification, or does it mean a different thing in each case? We may generalise and say that there are three series of six, and one series of three, and the others occur all singly.

We should logically look for a common factor in the Sūras bearing the same initials, and this factor should be different for Sūras bearing other initials. In all cases where the abbreviated letters occur, there is some mention of the Qur-ān or the Book. The *Itqān* makes an exception in the case of three Sūras, 'Ankabūt (S. xxix.), Rūm (S. xxx.), and Nūn (S. lxviii.). But a close perusal will show that these Sūras are no exceptions. In xxix. 27 we have a reference to the Book remaining in the family of Abraham, and later on we have a whole Section, (Rukū' No. 5), devoted to the Book, with special reference to the continuity of revelation in the previous Books and the Qur-ān (xxix. 45-51). In xxx. 58 there is express mention of the Qur-ān, and the whole argument of the Sūra leads up to the intimate relation between God's "Signs" in nature (xxx. 20-27) and His revelation in the Qur-ān. In S. lxviii. the very first verse begins the theme with the Pen as the instrument of writing, exhorts Muṣṭafā to stand forth boldly to proclaim the Message, and ends (lxviii. 52) with the declaration that it is a Message for all the worlds.

These are general considerations, which I have thought it most convenient to present in the form of an Appendix.

INTRODUCTION TO SURA III (*Āl-i-'Imrān*).

This Sūra is cognate to Sūra II, but the matter is here treated from a different point of view. The references to Badr (Ramadhān, H. 2) and Uḥud (Shawwāl, H. 3) give a clue to the dates of those passages.

Like Sūra II, it takes a general view of the religious history of mankind, with special reference to the People of the Book, proceeds to explain the birth of the new People of Islam and their ordinances, insists on the need of struggle and fighting in the cause of Truth, and exhorts those who have been blessed with Islam to remain constant in Faith, pray for guidance, and maintain their spiritual hope for the Future.

The new points of view developed are : (1) The emphasis is here laid on the duty of the Christians to accept the new light ; the Christians are here specially appealed to, as the Jews were specially appealed to in the last Sūra ; (2) the lessons of the battles of Badr and Uḥud are set out for the Muslim community ; and (3) the responsibilities of that community are insisted on both internally and in their relations to those outside.

Summary.—God having revealed His Book, confirming previous revelations, we must accept it in all reverence, try to understand its meaning, and reject the base motives which make Truth unacceptable to those who reject Faith. (iii. 1-20, and C. 54.)

The People of the Book had only a portion of the Book, and if they reject the complete Book, the People of Faith must part company with them, and their day is done. (iii. 21-30 and C. 55.)

The story of the family of 'Imrān (the father of Moses) leads us from the Mosaic Dispensation to the miracles connected with the birth of Jesus and his ministry. (iii. 31-63, and C. 56.)

God's revelation being continuous, all people are invited to accept its completion in Islam, and controversies are deprecated. The Muslims are asked to hold together in union and harmony, and are promised security from harm from their enemies, and enjoined to seek friendship among their own people. (iii. 64-120, and C. 57.)

The battle of Badr showed how God helps and upholds the virtuous, and how patience, perseverance, and discipline find their reward ; on the other hand, the lessons of Uḥud must be learnt, not in despair, but in the exercise of the higher virtues and in contempt of pain and death. (iii. 121-148, and C. 58.)

The misfortunes at Uḥud are shown to be due to the indiscipline of some, the indecision and selfishness of others, and cowardice on the part of the Hypocrites, but no enemy can hurt God's Cause. (iii. 149-180, and C. 59.)

The taunts of the enemy should be disregarded, and sincere prayer offered to God, Who would grant His servants success and prosperity. (iii. 181-200, and C. 60.)

C. 54.—The Qur-ān revelation has, step by step,
(iii. 1-20.) Confirmed the Law of Moses and the Gospel
Of Jesus. It is a guide from God,
And appeals to reason and understanding.
Let us understand it rightly, in reverence
And truth, unswayed by those who reject
Faith, and seeking ever the reward
Of the pleasure of God, through firmness,
Patience, discipline, and charity, and offering others
The light which we have ourselves received.

Sura III.

Al-i- 'Imran, or The Family of 'Imran.

In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

1. 342

2. God ! There is no god
But He,—the Living,
The Self-Subsisting, Eternal. 343

3. It is He Who sent down
To thee (step by step),
In truth, the Book,
Confirming what went before it ;
And He sent down the Law
(Of Moses) and the Gospel 344
(Of Jesus) before this,
As a guide to mankind,
And He sent down the Criterion 345
(Of judgment between right and
wrong).

4. Then those who reject
Faith in the Signs of God
Will suffer the severest
Penalty, and God
Is Exalted in Might,
Lord of Retribution.

5. From God, verily
Nothing is hidden
On earth or in the heavens.

6. He it is Who shapes you
In the wombs as He pleases. 346



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
١- اَلَمْ

٢- اَللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

٣- نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ
وَأَنزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ
مِنْ قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَأَنزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ

٤- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ

٥- إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

٦- هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ

342. See note to ii. 1.

343. Cf. ii. 255.

344. In some editions the break between verses 3 and 4 occurs here in the middle of the sentence, but in the edition of *Hāfiṣ* Uthmān, followed by the Egyptian Concordance *Faṭḥ-ur-Rahmān*, the break occurs at the word *Furqān*. In verse-divisions our classicists have mainly followed rhythm. As the word *Furqān* from this point of view is parallel to the word *Intiqām*, which ends the next verse, I have accepted the verse-division at *Furqān* as more in consonance with Quranic rhythm. It makes no real difference to the numbering of the verses, as there is only a question of whether one line should go into verse 3 or verse 4.

From this point onwards in this Sūra, M. M. A., followed by H. G. S., numbers the verses so that there is a deficiency of one compared with the accepted numbering in the most approved Texts, which I have followed, including that of the Egyptian Royal Edition and that of our Anjuman-i-Hilmāyat-i-Islām.

345. *Criterion* : *Furqān* : for meaning see ii. 53, n. 68.

346. Who can penetrate the mystery of life when a new life is just being born, except God ? The reference to the mystery of birth prepares us for the mystery of the birth of Jesus mentioned in iii. 41 and the following verses.

There is no god but He,
The Exalted in Might,
The Wise.

7. **■** It is Who has sent down
To thee the Book :
In it are verses
Basic or fundamental
(Of established meaning) ;
They are the foundation ³⁴⁷
Of the Book : others
Are allegorical. But those
In whose hearts is perversity follow
The part thereof that is allegorical,
Seeking discord, and searching
For its hidden meanings,
But no one knows
Its hidden meanings except God.
And those who are firmly grounded ³⁴⁸
In knowledge say : " We believe
In the Book ; the whole of it
Is from our Lord : " and none
Will grasp the Message
Except men of understanding.

8. " Our Lord ! " (they say),
" Let not our hearts deviate
Now after Thou hast guided us,
But grant us mercy
From Thine own Presence ;
For Thou art the Grantor
Of bounties without measure.

يَسَاءُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ٥

٥- هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ

مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ

هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ

فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ

مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ

يَقُولُونَ أَمْثَابِهِ

كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا

وَمَا يَذْكُرُ إِلَّا أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ ٥

٥- رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا

وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً

إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ٥

قُلُوبُ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ

347. This passage gives us an important clue to the interpretation of the Holy Qur-ān. Broadly speaking, it may be divided into two portions, not given separately, but intermingled; viz. (1) the nucleus or foundation of the Book, literally "the mother of the Book", and (2) the part which is figurative, metaphorical, or allegorical. It is very fascinating to take up the latter, and exercise our ingenuity about its inner meaning, but it refers to such profound spiritual matters that human language is inadequate to it, and though people of wisdom may get some light from it, no one should be dogmatic, as the final meaning is known to God alone. The Commentators usually understand the verses "of established meaning" (*muhkam*) to refer to the categorical orders of the *Shari'ah* (or the Law), which are plain to everyone's understanding. But perhaps the meaning is wider: the "mother of the Book" must include the very foundation on which all Law rests, the essence of God's Message, as distinguished from the various illustrative parables, allegories, and ordinances.

If we refer to xi. 1 and xxxix. 23, we shall find that in a sense the whole of the Qur-ān has both "established meaning" and allegorical meaning. The division is not between the verses, but between the meaning to be attached to them. Each verse is but a Sign or Symbol: what it represents is something immediately applicable, and something eternal and independent of time and space,—the "Forms of Ideas" in Plato's Philosophy. The wise man will understand that there is an "essence" and an illustrative clothing given to the essence, throughout the Book. We must try to understand it as best we can, but not waste our energies in disputing about matters beyond our depth.

348. One reading, rejected by the majority of Commentators, but accepted by Mujāhid and others, would not make a break at the point here marked *Waqfa Lāsīm*, but would run the two sentences together. In that case the construction would run: "No one knows its hidden meanings except God and those who are firm in knowledge. They say", etc.

9. "Our Lord! Thou art He
That will gather mankind
Together against a Day about which
There is no doubt; for God
Never fails in His promise."³⁴⁹

٩- رَبَّنَا أَنْتَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ
لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ۝

SECTION 2.

10. Those who reject Faith,—
Neither their possessions
Nor their (numerous) progeny
Will avail them aught
Against God: they are themselves
But fuel for the Fire.

١٠- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ
أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ ۝

11. (Their plight will be)
No better than that
Of the people of Pharaoh,³⁵⁰
And their predecessors:
They denied Our Signs,
And God called them to account
For their sins.
For God is strict
In punishment.

١١- كَذَّابٌ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

12. Say to those who reject Faith:
"Soon will ye be vanquished"³⁵¹
And gathered together
To Hell,—an evil bed
Indeed (to lie on)!

١٢- قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَتُغْلَبُونَ
وَتُنْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ
وَبِئْسَ الْيَهَادُ ۝

13. "There has already been
For you a Sign

١٣- قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ

349. This is the prayer of those who are firmly grounded in knowledge. The more they know, the more they realise how little they know of all the depths of Truth in the spiritual world. But they have Faith. The glimpses they get of Truth they wish to hold fast in their hearts, and they pray to God to preserve them from deviating even from what light they have got. They are sure of their eventual return to God, when all doubts will be solved.

350. From the beginning of the world, sin, oppression, arrogance, and want of Faith have gone together. The Pharaoh of the time of Moses relied upon his power, his territory, his armies, and his resources to mock at Moses the man of God and to oppress the people of Moses. God saved the Israelites and punished their oppressors through many plagues and calamities.

351. As Moses warned the Egyptians, so the warning is here sounded to the Pagan Arabs, the Jews and the Christians, and all who resisted Faith, that their resistance would be in vain. Already the battle of Badr (referred to in the next verse) had been a warning how Faith must conquer with the help of God. The next few decades saw the Byzantine and the Persian Empires overthrown because of their arrogance and their resistance to the Law of God.

In the two armies
That met (in combat) : ³⁵²
One was fighting in the Cause
Of God, the other
Resisting God ; these saw
With their own eyes
Twice their number. ³⁵³
But God doth support
With His aid whom He pleaseth.
In this is a warning
For such as have eyes to see."

14. Fair in the eyes of men
Is the love of things they covet : ³⁵⁴
Women and sons ;
Heaped-up hoards
Of gold and silver ; horses
Branded (for blood and excellence) ;
And (wealth of) cattle
And well-tilled land.
Such are the possessions
Of this world's life ;
But in nearness to God
Is the best of the goals
(To return to).

15. Say : Shall I give you
Glad tidings of things
Far better than those ?
For the righteous are Gardens

فِي فِئَتَيْنِ التَّقَاتِ فِئَةٌ تَقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ وَأُخْرَى كَافِرَةٌ
يَرَوْنَهُمْ فَمِنْهُمْ رَأَى الْعَيْنِ
وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي بِنَصْرِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ

١٣- زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ
النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ
مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ
وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ
وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ
ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا
وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَاِبِ ○

١٥- قُلْ أَوْفَيْتُكُمْ بِمَخِيْرٍ مِّنْ ذَٰلِكُمْ
لِّلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ

352. This refers to the battle of Badr in Ramadhān in the second year of the Hijra. The little exiled community of Meccan Muslims, with their friends in Medina, had organised themselves into a God-fearing community, but were constantly in danger of being attacked by their Pagan enemies of Mecca, in alliance with some of the disaffected elements (Jews and Hypocrites) in or near Medina itself. The design of the Meccans was to gather all the resources they could, and with an overwhelming force, to crush and annihilate Muḥammad and his party. To this end Abi Sufyān was leading a richly-laden caravan from Syria to Mecca. He called for armed aid from Mecca. The battle was fought in the plain of Badr, about 50 miles south-west of Medina. The Muslim force consisted of only about 313 men, mostly unarmed, but they were led by Muḥammad, and they were fighting for their Faith. The Meccan army, well-armed and well-equipped, numbered over a thousand and had among its leaders some of the most experienced warriors of Arabia, including Abū Jahl, the inveterate foe and persecutor of Islam. Against all odds the Muslims won a brilliant victory, and many of the enemy leaders, including Abū Jahl, were killed.

353. It was impossible, without the miraculous aid of God, for such a small and ill-equipped force as was the Muslim band, to defeat the large and well-found force of the enemy. But their firmness, zeal, and discipline won them divine aid. Enemy prisoners stated that the enemy ranks saw the Muslim force to be many times larger than it was.

354. The pleasures of this world are first enumerated : women for love ; sons for strength and pride ; hoarded riches, which procure all luxuries ; the best and finest pedigree horses ; cattle, the measure of wealth in the ancient world, as well as the means and symbols of good farming in the modern world ; and broad acres of well-tilled land. By analogy, we may include, for our mechanised age, machines of all kinds,—tractors, motor-cars, aeroplanes, the best internal-combustion engines, etc., etc. In "heaped-up hoards of gold and silver," the Arabic word translated *hoards* is *qanāṭir* plural of *qintār*, which literally means a Talent of 1,200 ounces of gold. That quantity of pure gold would coin into 5,097 sterling gold sovereigns, each containing 123.274 grains of gold 22 carats fine. These at present prices (say, Rs. 20 to the sovereign) would be worth more than a lakh of rupees. Heaped hoards of *qanāṭir* would therefore be boundless wealth "as wish can claim".

In nearness to their Lord,
With rivers flowing beneath ;
Therein is their eternal home ;
With Companions pure (and
holy) ;³⁵⁵
And the good pleasure of God.
For in God's sight
Are (all) His servants,—

16. (Namely), those who say :
" Our Lord ! we have indeed
Believed : forgive us, then,
Our sins, and save us
From the agony of the Fire ;"—

17. Those who show patience,
Firmness and self-control ;³⁵⁶
Who are true (in word and deed) ;
Who worship devoutly ;
Who spend (in the way of God) ;
And who pray for forgiveness
In the early hours of the morning.³⁵⁷

18. There is no god but He :
That is the witness of God,
His angels, and those endued
With knowledge, standing firm³⁵⁸
On justice. There is no god but He,
The Exalted in Power,
The Wise.

19. The Religion before God
Is Islam (submission to His Will) :
Nor did the People of the Book
Dissent therefrom except

تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ
وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ بِصِيرَةٍ بِالْعِبَادِ

١٦- الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
إِنَّمَا أَمْنَا فَأَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

١٧- الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ
وَالْقَنَاطِئِينَ وَالْمُتَّقِينَ
وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ

١٨- شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

١٩- إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ
وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتَابَ

355. Cf. ii. 25 and n. 44.

356. *Sabr* (*Sābirin*) includes many shades of meaning : I have specified three here, *viz.*, patience, firmness, and self-control. See ii. 45 and ii. 153 and notes thereon.

357. True servants of God are described in iii. 16 and 17. They have faith, humility, and hope (iii. 16) ; and they have certain virtues (iii. 17) *viz.*, (1) patience, steadfastness, self-restraint, and all that goes under the full definition of *Sabr* ; this shows a certain attitude of mind ; (2) in all their dealings they are true and sincere as they are also in their promises and words ; this marks them out in social conduct ; (3) further, their spiritual worship is earnest and deep, an inner counterpart of their outward conduct ; (4) their worship of God shows itself in their love of their fellow-men, for they are ready and liberal in charity ; and (5) their self-discipline is so great that the first thing they do every morning is humbly to approach their God.

358. God Himself speaks to us through His revelations (through angels) and through His Creation, for all Nature glorifies God. No thinking mind, if it only judges the matter fairly, can fail to find the same witness in his own heart and conscience. All this points to the Unity of God, His exalted nature, and His wisdom.

Through envy of each other,³⁵⁹
 After knowledge had come to them.
 But if any deny the Signs of God,
 God is swift in calling to account.


إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعِيَايَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

20. So if they dispute with thee,
 Say : " I have submitted
 My whole self³⁶⁰ to God
 And so have those
 Who follow me."
 And say to the People of the Book
 And to those who are unlearned :³⁶¹
 " Do ye (also) submit yourselves ? "
 If they do, they are in right
 guidance,
 But if they turn back,
 Thy duty is to convey the Message ;
 And in God's sight
 Are (all) His servants.³⁶²

۲۰- فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ أَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ؕ

- C. 55.—If the People who received
 (iii. 21-30.) Earlier revelations confine themselves
 To partial truths, and in their pride
 Shut their eyes to the whole of the Book
 Of God, their day is done :
 Let the Muslims seek the society
 And friendship of their own, and trust
 In God, who knows all, and holds
 Every soul responsible for its own deeds.

SECTION 3.

21.  to those who deny
 The Signs of God, and in defiance

۲۱- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ

359. *Bagyan* : through envy, through selfish contumacy or obstinacy, through sheer contrary-mindedness, or desire to resist or rebel. Cf. ii. 90, and ii. 213.

360. *Wajh* : whole self. See n. 114 to ii. 112.

361. The People of the Book may be supposed to know something about the previous religious history of mankind. To them the appeal should be easy and intelligible, as all Religion is one, and it is only being renewed in Islam. But the appeal is also made to the Pagan Arabs, who are unlearned, and who can well be expected to follow the example of one of their own, who received divine enlightenment, and was able to bring new knowledge to them. A great many of both these classes did so. But the few who resisted God's grace, and actually threatened and persecuted those who believed, are told that God will look after His own.

362. Note the literary skill in the argument as it proceeds. The mystery of birth faintly suggests that we are coming to the story of Jesus. The exposition of the Book suggests that Islam is the same religion as that of the People of the Book. Next we are told that the People of the Book made their religion one-sided, and through the priesthood of the family of 'Imrān, we are brought to the story of Jesus, who was rejected by a body of the Jews as Muḥammad was rejected by a body of both Jews and Christians.

Of right, ³⁶³ slay the Prophets,
And slay those who teach
Just dealing with mankind, ³⁶⁴
Announce to them a grievous
penalty.

22. They are those whose works
Will bear no fruit ³⁶⁵
In this world
And in the Hereafter,
Nor will they have
Anyone to help.

23. Hast thou not turned
Thy vision to those
Who have been given a portion ³⁶⁶
Of the Book? They are
Invited to the Book of God,
To settle their dispute,
But a party of them
Turn back and decline
(The arbitration). ³⁶⁷

24. This because they say :
" The Fire shall not touch us
But for a few numbered days " : ³⁶⁸
For their forgeries deceive them
As to their own religion.

25. But how (will they fare)
When We gather them together

وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَيَقْتُلُونَ
الَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ ۚ
فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ٢١
أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ٢٢

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ
الْكِتَابِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ
لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّى فُرْقًا مِّنْهُمْ
وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ٢٣

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَنْ تَمْسَنَا النَّارُ
إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ
وَعَرَّضُوا فِي دِينِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ٢٤
فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جُمِعْتُمْ

363. Right : *haqq* has many shades of meaning : (1) right, in the sense of having a right to something ; (2) right, in the sense of straight conduct, as opposed to wrong ; (3) truth ; (4) justice. All these shades are implied here

364. Examples of the Prophets slain were : " the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar " : Matt. xxiii. 35. Cf. Q. ii. 61 n. 75. Again, John the Baptist (Yahyā, noble, chaste, a prophet, of the goodly company of the righteous, Q. iii. 39), was bound, imprisoned, and beheaded, and his head presented to a dancing harlot : Matt. xiv. 1-11. An example of a just man in another nation, who taught righteousness and was put to death, was Socrates, the Greek philosopher.

365. Cf. ii. 217, end.

366. A *portion of the Book*. I conceive that God's revelation as a whole throughout the ages is " The Book ". The Law of Moses, and the Gospel of Jesus were portions of the Book. The Qur-ān completes the revelation and is *par excellence* the Book of God.

367. The Commentators mention a particular incident when a dispute was submitted by the Jews for arbitration to the Holy Apostle. He appealed to the authority of their own books, but they tried to conceal and prevaricate. The general lesson is that the People of the Book should have been the first to welcome in Muhammad the living exponent of the Message of God as a whole, and some of them did so ; but others turned away from guilty arrogance relying on corrupted texts and doctrines forged out of their own fancies, though they were not conformable to reason and good sense.

368. Cf. Q. ii. 80,

Against a Day about which
There is no doubt,
And each soul will be paid out
Just what it has earned,
Without (favour or) injustice ?

26. Say: " O God !

Lord of Power (and Rule),
Thou givest Power
To whom Thou pleasest,
And Thou strippest off Power
From whom Thou pleasest,
Thou enduest with honour
Whom Thou pleasest,
And Thou bringest low
Whom Thou pleasest :
In Thy hand is all Good. ³⁶⁹
Verily, over all things
Thou hast power.

27. " Thou causest the Night

To gain on the Day,
And Thou causest the Day
To gain on the Night ; ³⁷⁰
Thou bringest the Living
Out of the Dead,
And Thou bringest the Dead
Out of the Living ; ³⁷¹
And Thou givest sustenance
To whom Thou pleasest,
Without measure. " ³⁷²

28. Let not the Believers

Take for friends or helpers

لَيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ
وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ○

٢٦- قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمَلِكِ
تُؤْتِي الْمَلِكَ مَن تَشَاءُ
وَتَنْزِعُ الْمَلِكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ
وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ
وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ
بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ
إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ○

٢٧- تُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ
وَتُؤَلِّجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ
وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ
وَتُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ
وَتَرْزُقُ مَن تَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ○

٢٨- لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ

369. Another glorious passage, full of meaning, both obvious and mystic. The governing phrase in it all is: "In Thy hand is all Good." What is the standard by which we may judge Good? It is God's Will. Therefore when we submit to God's Will, and real Islam illuminates us, we see the highest Good. There has been and is much controversy as to what is the Highest Good. To the Muslim there is no difficulty: it is the Will of God. He must ever strive to learn and understand that Will. But once in that fortress, he is secure. He is not troubled with the nature of Evil. Evil is the negation of God's Will. Good is conformity to God's Will. He does not cry with impatience against many things which give him pain and sorrow. He knows that "God is in His world", and that God is Good. God's Will is another name for God's Plan. There is nothing arbitrary or haphazard. We do not see the whole Plan or Will. But we have Faith. All is, will be, must be, right in the end.

370. True in many senses. In every twenty-four hours, night merges into day, and day into night, and there is no clear boundary between them. In every solar year, the night gains on the day after the summer solstice, and the day gains on the night after the winter solstice. But further, if light and darkness are viewed as symbols of (a) knowledge and ignorance, (b) happiness and misery, (c) spiritual insight and spiritual blindness, God's Plan or Will works here too as in the physical world, and in His hand is all Good.

371. We can interpret Dead and Living in even more senses than Day and Night: death physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual. Life and Death may also apply to collective, group, or national life. And, who has ever solved the mystery of Life? But Faith refers it to God's Will and Plan.

372. Again true in all the senses suggested in the two previous notes. The only true Reality is God. All else has its basis and sustenance in Him. Lest our little minds create fear out of "nicely calculated less or more" we are told at once that God's bounty is without measure or account.

Unbelievers rather than
Believers : if any do that,
In nothing will there be help
From God : except by way
Of precaution, that ye may
Guard yourselves from them. ³⁷³
But God cautions you
(To remember) Himself ;
For the final goal
Is to God.

29. Say : " Whether ye hide
What is in your hearts
Or reveal it,
God knows it all :
He knows what is
In the heavens,
And what is on earth.
And God has power
Over all things.

30. " On the Day when every soul
Will be confronted
With all the good it has done,
And all the evil it has done,
It will wish there were
A great distance
Between it and its evil.
But God cautions you
(To remember) Himself.
And God is full of kindness
To those that serve Him."

مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فليْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي
شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاتُوا
وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ
وَالِلَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ ○

٢٩- قُلْ إِنْ تُحِبُّوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ
أَوْ تُبْذَرُوهُ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ○

٣٠- يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ
مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحْضَرًا
وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ
تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا
وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ
وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ○

معرفته
عند الرب
المتقين

- C. 56.—God's truth is continuous, and His Apostles
(iii. 31-63.) From Adam, through Noah and Abraham,
Down to the last of the Prophets, Muḥammad,
Form one brotherhood. Of the progeny
Of 'Imrān, father of Moses and Aaron,
Sprang a woman, who devoted
Her unborn offspring to God.
The child was Mary the mother of Jesus.
Her cousin was the wife of the priest
Zakariya, who took charge of Mary.

373. If Faith is a fundamental matter in our lives, our associations and friendships will naturally be with those who share our Faith. " Evil communications corrupt good manners " : and evil company may corrupt Faith. In our ordinary everyday affairs of business, we are asked to seek the help of Believers rather than Unbelievers. Only in this way can our community be strong in organisation and unity. But where there is no question of preference, or where in self-defence we have to take the assistance of those not belonging to our Faith, that is permissible. In any case we must not weaken our Brotherhood : we must try to make it stronger if possible.

To Zakariya, in his old age, was born
 A son Yahyā, amid prodigies :
 Yahyā was the herald of Jesus
 The son of Mary, and was known
 As John the Baptist. Jesus
 Was of virgin birth,
 And performed many miracles.
 But those to whom he came as Prophet
 Rejected him, and plotted for his death.
 Their plots failed, for God's Plan
 Is above man's plots. So will it be
 With Islam, the Truth from all eternity.

SECTION 4.

31. Say : " If ye do love God,
 Follow me : God will love you
 And forgive you your sins :
 For God is Oft-Forgiving,
 Most Merciful."

٣١- قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ
 فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ
 وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

32. Say : " Obey God
 And His Apostle " :
 But if they turn back,
 God loveth not those
 Who reject Faith.

٣٢- قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ
 فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
 فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ

33. God did choose
 Adam and Noah, the family
 Of Abraham, and the family
 Of 'Imrān above all people,—

٣٣- إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ
 إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

34. Offspring, one of the other ;³⁷⁴
 And God heareth
 And knoweth all things.

٣٤- ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ
 وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

35. Behold ! a woman of 'Imrān³⁷⁵
 Said : " O my Lord ! I do

٣٥- إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي

374. The Prophets in the Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dispensation form one family literally. But the argument is wider. All men of God form spiritually one family. If you love and obey God, love and obey His Messenger who is actually present with you (in the flesh or in his teaching). Your love, obedience, and discipline will be the test of your Faith.

375. Now we begin the story of Jesus. As a prelude we have the birth of Mary and the parallel story of John the Baptist, Yahyā the son of Zakariya. Yahyā's mother Elisabeth was a cousin of Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke i. 36), and therefore John and Jesus were cousins by blood, and there was a spiritual cousinhood in their birth¹ and career. Elisabeth was one of the daughters of Aaron (Luke i. 5), of a priestly family which went back to Aaron the brother of Moses and son of 'Imrān. Her husband Zakariya was actually a priest, and her cousin Mary was presumably also of a priestly family. By tradition Mary's mother was called Hannah (in Latin, Anna, and in English, Anne), and her father was called 'Imrān. Hannah is therefore both a descendant of the priestly house of 'Imrān and the wife of 'Imrān,—a woman of 'Imrān in a double sense.

Dedicate unto Thee
What is in my womb
For Thy special service : ³⁷⁶
So accept this of me :
For Thou hearest
And knowest all things."

36. When she was delivered,
She said : " O my Lord !
Behold ! I am delivered
Of a female child ! "—
And God knew best
What she brought forth—³⁷⁷
" And nowise is the male
Like the female. ³⁷⁸
I have named her Mary,
And I commend her
And her offspring
To Thy protection
From the Evil One,
The Rejected."

37. Right graciously
Did her Lord accept her :
He made her grow
In purity and beauty :
To the care of Zakariya
Was she assigned.
Every time that he entered
(Her) chamber to see her,
He found her supplied
With sustenance. He said :
" O Mary ! Whence (comes) this
To you ? " She said :
" From God : for God
Provides sustenance
To whom He pleases,
Without measure." ³⁷⁹

نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا
فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

٣٦- فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ ارْحَنِي وَضَعْتُهَا
أُنْثَى
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتُ
وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَى
وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ
وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ
وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ○

٣٧- فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ
وَأَوْثَقَهَا نِصَابًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا
كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ
وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا
قَالَ يَتِيمٌ إِنِّي لَكَ هِدَا
قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ○

376. *Muharrar* = freed from all worldly affairs and specially dedicated to God's service. She expected a son, who was to be a special devotee, a miraculous son of the old age of his parents, but God gave her instead a daughter. But that daughter was Mary the mother of Jesus, the chosen one among the women : iii. 42

377. The mother of Mary expected a male child. Was she disappointed that it was a female child? No, for she had Faith, and she knew that God's Plan was better than any wishes of hers. Mary was no ordinary girl: only God knew what it was that her mother brought forth.

378. The female child could not be devoted to Temple service under the Mosaic law, as she intended. But she was marked out for a special destiny as a miracle-child, to be the mother of the miracle-child Jesus. She was content to seek God's protection for her against all evil. There is a certain sense of pride in the girl on the part of the mother.

379. Mary grew under God's special protection. Her sustenance, under which we may include both her physical needs and her spiritual food, came from God, and her growth was indeed a "goodly growth", which I have tried to express in the Text by the words "purity and beauty". Some apocryphal Christian writings say that she was brought up in the Temple to the age of twelve like a dove, and that she was fed by angels.

38. Where did Zakariya
Pray to his Lord, saying :
" O my Lord ! Grant unto me
From Thee a progeny
That is pure : for Thou
Art He that heareth prayer ! ³⁸⁰

39. While he was standing
In prayer in the chamber,
The angels called unto him :
" God doth give thee
Glad tidings of Yahya,
Witnessing the truth
Of a Word from God, ³⁸¹ and (be
Besides) noble, chaste,
And a Prophet,—
Of the (goodly) company
Of the righteous."

40. He said : " O my Lord !
How shall I have a son,
Seeing I am very old,
And my wife is barren ? "
" Thus," was the answer,
" Doth God accomplish
What He willeth."

41. He said : " O my Lord ! "
Give me a Sign !
" Thy Sign," was the answer,
" Shall be that thou
Shalt speak to no man
For three days
But with signals.
Then celebrate
The praises of thy Lord
Again and again,
And glorify Him
In the evening
And in the morning."

٣٨- هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ
لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً
إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ○

٣٩- فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ
أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى
مُصَدِّقًا لِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْ اللَّهِ
وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا
وَظَاهِرًا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ○

٤٠- قَالَ رَبِّ أَتَى بِكَ عَلْمٌ
وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي الْكِبَرُ
وَأُمْرَاتِي عَاقِرٌ
قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ ○

٤١- قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً
قَالَ إِنِّي نَكَحْتُ النِّسَاءَ
ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ
إِلَّا رَمْرًا
وَإِذْ كُنْتَ رَبِّكَ كَثِيرًا
وَسَيِّمٌ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ ○

380. The birth of Mary, the mystic mother of Jesus, of John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus, and of Jesus, the mystic prophet of Israel, whom Israel rejected, occurred in that order chronologically, and are told in that order. They are all inter-connected. Zakariya prayed for no ordinary son. He and his wife were past the age of parenthood. Seeing the growth of the mystic girl Mary, he prayed for some mystic child from God,—from Thee, a progeny that is pure". Perhaps he had adoption in his mind. Did he want to adopt Mary? To his surprise, he is given a son in the flesh, ushered in by a mystic Sign.

381. Notice : " a Word from God ", not " the Word of God ", the epithet that mystical Christianity uses for Jesus. As stated in iii. 59 below, Jesus was created by a miracle, by God's word " Be ", and he was.

SECTION 5.

42. Behold! the angels said :
 " O Mary ! God hath chosen thee
 And purified thee—chosen thee³⁸²
 Above the women of all nations.

43. " O Mary ! worship
 Thy Lord devoutly :
 Prostrate thyself,
 And bow down (in prayer)
 With those who bow down."

44. This is part of the tidings³⁸³
 Of the things unseen,
 Which We reveal unto thee
 (O Apostle !) by inspiration :
 Thou wast not with them
 When they cast lots³⁸⁴
 With arrows, as to which
 Of them should be charged
 With the care of Mary :
 Nor wast thou with them
 When they disputed (the point).³⁸⁵

45. Behold ! the angels said :
 " O Mary ! God giveth thee
 Glad tidings of a Word
 From Him : his name
 Will be Christ Jesus,³⁸⁶
 The son of Mary, held in honour
 In this world and the Hereafter
 And of (the company of) those
 Nearest to God ;³⁸⁷

٢٢- وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَسِّرْهُمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ
 الْعَالَمِينَ

٢٣- يَسِّرْهُمُ اقْنَبِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي
 وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

٢٤- ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ
 نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ
 إِذْ يَقُولُونَ أَفَلَا لَمَلَهُمْ
 إِلَهُهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ
 وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ
 إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ

٢٥- وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَسِّرْهُمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 يُكْشِرُكَ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ
 اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ
 وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
 وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ

382. Mary the mother of Jesus was unique, in that she gave birth to a son by a special miracle without the intervention of the customary physical means. This of course does not mean that she was more than human, any more than that her son was more than human. She had as much need to pray to God as anyone else. The Christian dogma, in all sects except the Unitarian, holds that Jesus was God and the son of God. The worship of Mary became the practice in the Roman Catholic Church, which calls Mary the Mother of God. This seems to have been endorsed by the Council of Ephesus in 431, in the century before Muhammad was born to sweep away the corruptions of the Church of Christ. For 'alamîn as meaning all nations, see iii. 96, n. 423.

383. *Things unseen* : mystic, spiritual. The whole story has a mystic meaning, and it would be unseemly to dispute or speculate about it.

384. Literally, *reeds* : *aqlām*. For the Arab custom of casting lots with arrows, see ii. 219, n. 241.

385. Christian apocryphal writings mention the contention between the priests as to the honour of taking charge of Mary, and how it was decided by means of rods or reeds in favour of Zakariya.

386. *Christ* : Greek, *Christos* = anointed : kings and priests were anointed to symbolise consecration to their office. The Hebrew and Arabic form is *Masih*.

387. Nearest to God : *Muqarrabin*, Cf. Q. lvi. 11.

46. " He shall speak to the people
In childhood and in maturity.³⁸⁸
And he shall be (of the company)
Of the righteous."

٣٨٨- وَيَكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا
وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ٥

47. She said : " O my Lord !³⁸⁹
How shall I have a son
When no man hath touched me ? "
He said ; " Even so :
God createth
What He willeth :
When He hath decreed
A Plan, He but saith
To it, ' Be,' and it is !

٣٨٩- قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ
وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ
قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ
إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا
فَأَنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ٥

48. " And God will teach him
The Book and Wisdom,
The Law and the Gospel,

٣٩٠- وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ٥

49. " And (appoint him)
An apostle to the Children
Of Israel, (with this message) :
" ' I have come to you,
With a Sign from your Lord,
In that I make for you
Out of clay, as it were,
The figure of a bird,
And breathe into it,
And it becomes a bird
By God's leave :³⁹⁰
And I heal those
Born blind, and the lepers,
And I quicken the dead,
By God's leave ;
And I declare to you
What ye eat, and what ye store³⁹¹
In your houses. Surely
Therein is a Sign for you
If ye did believe ;

٣٩١- وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ
أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ
فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ
وَأُنْصِتُ لِلْمَوْتِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
وَأَنْبِئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ
فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ إِن
كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ٥

388. The ministry of Jesus lasted only about three years, from 30 to 33 years of his age, when in the eyes of his enemies he was crucified. But the Gospel of Luke (ii. 46) describes him as disputing with the doctors in the Temple at the age of 12, and even earlier, as a child, he was "strong in spirit, filled with wisdom" (Luke ii. 40). Some apocryphal Gospels describe him as preaching from infancy.

389. She was addressed by angels, who gave her God's message. In reply she speaks as to God. In reply, apparently an angel again gives God's message.

390. This miracle of the clay birds is found in some of the apocryphal Gospels; those of curing the blind and the lepers and raising the dead are in the canonical Gospels. The original Gospel (see iii. 48) was not the various stories written afterwards by disciples, but the real Message taught direct by Jesus.

391. I do not know whether this clause refers to a particular incident, or generally to a prophetic knowledge of what is not known to ordinary people.

50. " (I have come to you),
To attest the Law
Which was before me.
And to make lawful
To you part of what was
(Before) forbidden to you ;
I have come to you
With a Sign from your Lord.
So fear God,
And obey me.

51. " ' It is God
Who is my Lord
And your Lord ;
Then worship Him.
This is a Way
That is straight.' "

52. When Jesus found
Unbelief on their part
He said : " Who will be
My helpers to (the work
Of) God ? " Said the Disciples :
" We are God's helpers :
We believe in God,
And do thou bear witness .
That we are Muslims. ³⁹²

53. " Our Lord ! we believe
In what Thou hast revealed,
And we follow the Apostle ;
Then write us down
Among those who bear witness."

54. And (the unbelievers)
Plotted and planned,
And God too planned, ³⁹³
And the best of planners
Is God.

٥٠- وَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ
وَلِأَجْلِ لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي
حُظِرَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ٥٠

٥١- إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي
وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ
هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ٥١

٥٢- فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ
قَالَ مَنِ الْمُنَاصَرُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ
قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ
أَمَّا بِأَلَّهِ
وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّكَ مُسْلِمُونَ ٥٢

٥٣- رَبَّنَا أَمَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ
وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ
فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ٥٣

٥٤- وَمَكُرُوا وَمَكَّرَ اللَّهُ
وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكِرِينَ ٥٤

392. The story of Jesus is told with special application to the time of the Apostle Muhammad. Note the word helpers (Anṣār) in this connection, and the reference to plotters in iii. 54. It was the one Religion—the Religion of God, which was in essence the religion of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. The argument runs: why do ye then now make divisions and reject the living Teacher? Islam is: bowing to the Will of God. All who have faith should bow to the Will of God and be Muslims.

393. The Arabic *makara* has both a bad and a good meaning, that of making an intricate plan to carry out some secret purpose. The enemies of God are constantly doing that. But God—in whose hands is all good—has His plans also, against which the evil ones will have no chance whatever.

SECTION 6.

55. Behold ! God said :
 " O Jesus ! I will take thee ³⁹⁴
 And raise thee to Myself
 And clear thee (of the falsehoods) ³⁹⁵
 Of those who blaspheme ;
 I will make those
 Who follow thee superior ³⁹⁶
 To those who reject Faith,
 To the Day of Resurrection :
 Then shall ye all
 Return unto Me,
 And I will judge
 Between you of the matters
 Wherein ye dispute. ³⁹⁷

56. " As to those who reject Faith,
 I will punish them
 With terrible agony
 In this world and in the Hereafter,
 Nor will they have
 Anyone to help.

57. " As to those who believe
 And work righteousness,
 God will pay them (in full)
 Their reward ;
 But God loveth not
 Those who do wrong.

58. " This is what We rehearse
 Unto thee of the Signs
 And the Message
 Of Wisdom."

٥٥- اِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ
 وَارْفَعْكَ اِلَيْنَا وَمُطَهِّرًا
 مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
 وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ
 الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ
 ثُمَّ اِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ
 فَاحْكُم بَيْنَكُمْ
 فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ۝

٥٦- فَاَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَاَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا
 شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
 وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ۝

٥٧- وَاَمَّا الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
 فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ اُجُورَهُمْ
 وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

٥٨- ذَلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ
 وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ ۝

394. Read this with iv. 157, where it is said that the Jews neither crucified nor killed Jesus, but that another was killed in his likeness. The guilt of the Jews remained, but Jesus was eventually taken up to God.

395. Jesus was charged by the Jews with blasphemy as claiming to be God or the son of God. The Christians (except a few early sects which were annihilated by persecution, and the modern sect of Unitarians, who are almost Muslims) adopted the substance of the claim, and made it the cornerstone of their faith. God clears Jesus of such a charge or claim.

396. *Those who follow thee* : The Muslims are the true Christians, for they follow (or should follow) the true teaching of Christ, which did not include the blasphemy that he was God or the son of God in the literal sense. But there is a large body of men, who by birth inherit such teaching nominally, but their hearts do not consent to it. Their real Muslim virtues (which from their point of view they call Christian virtues) entitle them to be called Christians, and to receive the leading position which they at present occupy in the world of men.

397. All the controversies about dogma and faith will disappear when we appear before God. He will judge not by what we profess but by what we are.

59. The similitude of Jesus
Before God is as that of Adam ; ³⁹⁸
He created him from dust,
Then said to him : " Be " :
And he was.

٥٩- إِنْ مَثَلُ عِيسَى عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ
خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ
ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ○

60. The truth (comes)
From God alone ;
So be not of those
Who doubt. ³⁹⁹

٦٠- الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ
فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُتَرَدِّينَ ○

61. If any one disputes
In this matter with thee,
Now after (full) knowledge
Hath come to thee,
Say : " Come ! let us
Gather together,—
Our sons and your sons,
Our women and your women,
Ourselves and yourselves :
Then let us earnestly pray,
And invoke the curse
Of God on those who lie ! " ⁴⁰⁰

٦١- فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا
نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ
وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ
ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ
لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ ○

62. This is the true account : ⁴⁰¹
There is no god
Except God ;
And God—He is indeed

٦٢- إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ
وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ

398. After a description of the high position which Jesus occupies as a prophet, we have a repudiation of the dogma that he was God, or the son of God, or anything more than a man. If it is said that he was born without a human father, Adam was also so born. Indeed Adam was born without either a human father or mother. As far as our physical bodies are concerned they are mere dust. In God's sight Jesus was as dust just as Adam was or humanity is. The greatness of Jesus arose from the divine command " Be " : for after that he was—more than dust—a great spiritual leader and teacher.

399. The truth does not necessarily come from priests, or from the superstitions of whole peoples. It comes from God, and where there is a direct revelation, there is no room for doubt.

400. In the year of Deputations, 10th of the Hijra, came a Christian embassy from Najrān (towards Yaman, about 150 miles north of Ṣanāʾ). They were much impressed on hearing this passage of the Qur-ān explaining the true position of Christ, and they entered into tributary relations with the new Muslim State. But ingrained habits and customs prevented them from accepting Islam as a body. The Holy Apostle, firm in his faith, proposed a *Mubāhala*, i.e., a solemn meeting, in which both sides should summon not only their men, but their women and children, earnestly pray to God, and invoke the curse of God on those who should lie. Those who had a pure and sincere faith would not hesitate. The Christians declined, and they were dismissed in a spirit of tolerance, with a promise of protection from the State in return for tribute, " the wages of rule," as it is called in the *Ain-i-Akbari*.

401. We are now in a position to deal with the questions which we left over at ii. 87. Jesus is no more than a man. It is against reason and revelation to call him God or the son of God. He is called the son of Mary to emphasize this. He had no known human father, as his birth was miraculous. But it is not this which raises him to his high spiritual position as a prophet, but because God called him to his office. The praise is due to God, Who by His Word gave him spiritual strength—"strengthened him with the holy spirit". The miracles which surround his story relate not only to his birth and his life and death, but also to his mother Mary and his precursor Yahyā. These were the "Clear Signs" which he brought. It was those who misunderstood him who obscured his clear Signs and surrounded him with mysteries of their own invention.

The Exalted in Power,
The Wise.

○ الْغَزِيرُ الْحَكِيمُ

63. But if they turn back,
God hath full knowledge
Of those who do mischief.

٦٣- فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ ○

C. 57.—Islam doth invite all people
(iii. 64-120.) To the Truth : there is no cause
For dissembling or disputing.
False are the people who corrupt
God's truth, or hinder men
From coming to God. Let the Muslims
Hold together in unity and discipline,
Knowing that they have a mission
Of righteousness for humanity.
No harm can come to them.
Though there are good men and true
In other Faiths, Muslims must
Be true to their own Brotherhood.
They should seek help and friendship
From their own, and stand firm
In constancy and patient perseverance.

SECTION 7.

64. Say : " O People
Of the Book ! come
To common terms
As between us and you :
That we worship
None but God ;
That we associate
No partners with Him ;
That we erect not,
From among ourselves,
Lords and patrons
Other than God." ⁴⁰²
If then they turn back,
Say ye : " Bear witness
That we (at least)
Are Muslims (bowing
To God's Will)."

٦٤- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ
سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ
وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ
بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا
مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
فَقُولُوا أَشْهَدُ
بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ○

402. In the abstract the People of the Book would agree to all three propositions. In practice they fail. Apart from doctrinal lapses from the unity of the One True God, there is the question of a consecrated Priesthood (among the Jews it was hereditary also), as if a mere human being—Cohen, or Pope, or Priest, or Brahman,—could claim superiority apart from his learning and the purity of his life, or could stand between man and God in some special sense. The same remarks apply to the worship of saints. They may be pure and holy, but no one can protect us or claim Lordship over us except God. For *Rabb*, see i. 2. n. Abraham was a true man of God, but he could not be called a Jew or a Christian as he lived long before the Law of Moses or the Gospel of Jesus was revealed.

65. Ye People of the Book !

Why dispute ye
About Abraham,
When the Law and the Gospel
Were not revealed
Till after him ?
Have ye no understanding ?

66. Ah ! Ye are those

Who fell to disputing
(Even) in matters of which
Ye had some knowledge !⁴⁰³
But why dispute ye
In matters of which
Ye have no knowledge ?
It is God Who knows,
And ye who know not !

67. Abraham was not a Jew

Nor yet a Christian ;
But he was true in Faith,
And bowed his will to God's,
(Which is Islam),
And he joined not gods with God.⁴⁰⁴

68. Without doubt, among men,

The nearest of kin to Abraham,
Are those who follow him,
As are also this Apostle
And those who believe :
And God is the Protector
Of those who have faith.

69. It is the wish of a section

Of the People of the Book
To lead you astray.
But they shall lead astray
(Not you), but themselves,
And they do not perceive !

70. Ye People of the Book !

Why reject ye

٦٥- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ

لِمَ تَحْجُجُونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَمَا أُنزِلَتِ التَّوْرَةُ وَالْإِنْجِيلُ
إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ○

٦٦- هَآؤُنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ حَاجِجَتُمْ

فِيمَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ
فَلِمَ تَحْجُجُونَ فِيمَا
لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

٦٧- مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا

وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا
وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا
وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○

٦٨- إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ

لِلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٦٩- وَدَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ

لَوْ يُضِلُّوكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ○

٧٠- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ


403. The number of sects among the Jews and Christians shows that they wrangled and disputed even about some of the matters of their own religion, of which they should have had some knowledge. But when they talk of Father Abraham, they are entirely out of court, as he lived before their peculiar systems were evolved.

404. Cf. ii. 135 and the whole argument in that passage.

The Signs of God,
Of which ye are
(Yourselves) witnesses ?

71. Ye People of the Book !
Why do ye clothe
Truth with falsehood,
And conceal the Truth,
While ye have knowledge ? ⁴⁰⁵

SECTION 8.

72.  section of the People
Of the Book say :
" Believe in the morning ⁴⁰⁶
What is revealed
To the Believers,
But reject it at the end
Of the day ; perchance
They may (themselves)
Turn back ;
73. " And believe no one
Unless he follows
Your religion."
Say : " True guidance
Is the guidance of God :
(Fear ye) lest a revelation ⁴⁰⁷
Be sent to someone (else)
Like unto that which was sent
Unto you ? Or that those
(Receiving such revelation)
Should engage you in argument
Before your Lord ? " ⁴⁰⁸
Say : " All bounties
Are in the hand of God :
He granteth them
To whom He pleaseth :

بَايَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ○

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْتُمُونَ
الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ
وَكُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ○

وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
اٰمِنُوْا بِالَّذِيْ
اُنْزِلَ عَلٰى الدِّيْنِ
اٰمِنُوْا وَجَهَ النَّهَارِ
وَاٰكْفُرُوْا اٰخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ○

وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوْا
اِلَّا بِمَنْ تَمِيْمٌ دِيْنَكُمْ
قُلْ اِنَّ الْهُدٰى هُدٰى اللّٰهِ
اِنْ يُؤْتِىْ اَحَدٌ
مِّثْلَ مَا اُوْتِيْتُمْ
اَوْ يَحْجِبْكُمْ عَنْ دِيْنِكُمْ
قُلْ اِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيْدِ اللّٰهِ
يُوْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ

405. There are many ways of preventing the access of people to the truth. One is to tamper with it, or trick it out in colours of falsehood : half-truths are often more dangerous than obvious falsehoods. Another is to conceal it altogether. Those who are jealous of a man of God, whom they actually see before them, do not allow his credentials or virtues to be known, or vilify him, or conceal facts which would attract people to him. When people do this of set purpose, against their own light (" of which ye are yourselves witnesses "), they are descending to the lowest depths of degradation, and they are doing more harm to themselves than to anyone else.

406. *Wajh* here has the sense of " beginning ", " early part ". The cynics who plotted against Islam actually asked their accomplices to join the Believers and then repudiate them.

407. The two clauses following have been variously construed, and some translations leave the sense ambiguous. I have construed the conjunction " *an* " to mean " lest ", as it undoubtedly does in vii. 172, " *an taqūlū* ", etc.

408. Cf. ii. 76. The People of the Book were doubly annoyed at the Muslims : (1) that they should (being outside their ranks) receive God's revelations, and (2) that having received such revelations, they should be able to convict them out of their own scriptures before their Lord !

And God careth for all,
And He knoweth all things."

74. For His Mercy He specially
chooseth

Whom He pleaseth ;
For God is the Lord
Of bounties unbounded.

75. Among the People of the Book
Are some who, if entrusted
With a hoard of gold, ⁴⁰⁹
Will (readily) pay it back ;
Others, who, if entrusted
With a single silver coin, ⁴¹⁰
Will not repay it unless
Thou constantly stoodest
Demanding, because,
They say, " there is no call
On us (to keep faith)
With these ignorant (Pagans). " ⁴¹¹
But they tell a lie against God,
And (well) they know it.

76. Nay.—Those that keep
Their plighted faith
And act aright,—verily
God loves those
Who act aright.

77. As for those who sell
The faith they owe to God
And their own plighted word
For a small price, ⁴¹²
They shall have no portion
In the Hereafter :

وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

٤٨- يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

٤٩- وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ
بِقِنْطَارٍ يُؤَدِّيهِ إِلَيْكَ
وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِدِينَارٍ لَا يُؤَدِّيهِ
إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا
فِي الْأُمُورِ شَيْءٌ
وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

٥٠- بَلَى مَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ
وَاتَّقَى

فَرَأَى اللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

٥١- إِنْ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ
وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
أُولَئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ

409. *Hoard of gold* : qintār : a talent of 1,200 ounces of gold, more than a lakh of rupees. See iii. 14. n. 354.

410. *Silver coin* : dinār. In the later Roman Empire, the denarius was a small silver coin, about the size of a four-anna piece. It must have been current in Syria and the markets of Arabia in the time of our Apostle. It was the coin whose name is translated in the English Bible by the word penny, Matt. xxii. 19 : hence the abbreviation of penny is d (=denarius). The later Arabian coin *dirhām* coined by the Umayyads, was a gold coin after the pattern of the Byzantine (Roman) *denarius aureus* and weighed about 66.349 grains troy, just a little more than a half-sovereign.

411. Every race imbued with race arrogance resorts to this kind of moral or religious subterfuge. Even if its members are usually honest or just among themselves, they are contemptuous of those outside their circle, and cheat and deceive them without any qualms of conscience. This is a "lie against God".

412. All our duties to our fellow-creatures are referred to the service and faith we owe to God. But in the matter of truth an appeal is made to our own self-respect as responsible beings : is it becoming that we should be false to our own word, to ourselves ? And then we are reminded that the utmost we can gain by falsifying God's word or being untrue to ourselves is but a miserable price. We get at best something very paltry as the price for selling our very souls.

Nor will God
(Deign to) speak to them
Or look at them
On the Day of Judgment,
Nor will He cleanse them ⁴¹³
(Of sin) : they shall have
A grievous Penalty.

78. There is among them
A section who distort
The Book with their tongues :
(As they read) you would think
It is a part of the Book,
But it is no part
Of the Book ; and they say,
" That is from God,"
But it is not from God :
It is they who tell
A lie against God,
And (well) they know it !

79. It is not (possible)
That a man, to whom
Is given the Book,
And Wisdom,
And the Prophetic office,
Should say to people :
" Be ye my worshippers
Rather than God's " : ⁴¹⁴
On the contrary
(He would say) :
" Be ye worshippers
Of Him Who is truly
The Cherisher of all :
For ye have taught
The Book and ye
Have studied it earnestly."

80. Nor would he instruct you
To take angels and prophets ⁴¹⁵
For Lords and Patrons.
What ! would he bid you

وَلَا يَكِلُهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

٤٨- وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوَنَ أَسْتَثْمُ
بِالْكِتَابِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ
عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

٤٩- مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَ وَالنَّبُوءَ
ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ
كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّكُمْ
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ
وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ

٨٠- وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ
وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَابًا أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكُفْرِ

413. Even on sinners—ordinary sinners—God will look with compassion and mercy ; He will speak words of kindness and cleanse them of their sins. But those who are in active rebellion against God and sin against their own light,—what mercy can they expect ?

414. It is not in reason or in the nature of things that God's messenger should preach against God. Jesus came to preach the true God.

415. Jesus was a prophet, and the Holy Spirit " with which he was strengthened " was the Angel who brought the revelations to him.

To unbelief after ye have
Bowed your will
(To God in Islam) ?

SECTION 9.

81. Behold ! God took
The Covenant of the Prophets, ¹¹⁶
Saying : " I give you
A Book and Wisdom ;
Then comes to you
An Apostle, confirming
What is with you ;
Do ye believe in him
And render him help."
God said : " Do ye agree,
And take this My Covenant
As binding on you ? "
They said : " We agree."
He said : " Then bear witness,
And I am with you
Among the witnesses."

82. If any turn back
After this, they are
Perverted transgressors.

83. Do they seek
For other than the Religion
Of God ?—while all creatures
In the heavens and on earth
Have, willing or unwilling, ¹¹⁷
Bowed to His Will
(Accepted Islam),
And to Him shall they
All be brought back.

بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

۸۱- وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ
لَمَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ
ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ
لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ ۚ
قَالَ أَأَشْرَأُ لَكُمْ وَآخَذْتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَلِكُمْ
أُصِرُّنَّ قَالُوا أَقْرَبُنَا ۚ
قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا
وَإِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ۝

۸۲- فَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ۝

۸۳- أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْتَغُونَ وَلَهُ اسْمُهُ
مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا
وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ۝

416. Cf. ii. 63, n. 78. The argument is : You (People of the Book) are bound by your own oaths, sworn solemnly in the presence of your own Prophets. In the Old Testament as it now exists, Muhammad is foretold in Deut. xviii. 18 ; and the rise of the Arab nation in Isaiah, xlii. 11, for Kedar was a son of Isma'il and the name is used for the Arab nation : in the New Testament as it now exists. Muhammad is foretold in the Gospel of St. John, xiv. 16, xv. 26, and xvi. 7 : the future Comforter cannot be the Holy Spirit as understood by Christians, because the Holy Spirit already was present, helping and guiding Jesus. The Greek word translated "Comforter" is "Paracletos", which is an easy corruption from "Periclytos", which is almost a literal translation of "Muhammad" or "Ahmad" : see Q. lxi. 6. Further, there were other Gospels that have perished, but of which traces still remain, which were even more specific in their reference to Muhammad ; e.g., the Gospel of St. Barnabas, of which an Italian translation is extant in the State Library at Vienna. It was edited in 1907 with an English translation by Mr. Lonsdale and Laura Ragg.

417. God's Truth is manifest, and all that is good and true and sane and normal accepts it with joy. But even where there is "disease in the heart" (Q. ii. 10), or judgment is obscured by perversity, every creature must eventually see and acknowledge God and His power (ii. 167). Cf. R. Bridges : "Testament of Beauty" : iv. 1419-22 :—"For God's love is unescapable as nature's environment, which if a man ignore or think to thrust it off, he is the ill-natured fool that runneth blindly on death." All Nature adores God, and Islam asks for nothing peculiar or sectarian ; it but asks that we follow our nature and make our will conformable to God's Will as seen in Nature, history, and revelation. Its message is universal.

84. Say : "We believe
In God, and in what
Has been revealed to us
And what was revealed
To Abraham, Isma'il,
Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes,
And in (the Books)
Given to Moses, Jesus,
And the Prophets,
From their Lord :
We make no distinction
Between one and another
Among them, and to God do we
Bow our will (in Islam)."

85. If anyone desires
A religion other than
Islam (submission to God),⁴¹⁸
Never will it be accepted
Of him ; and in the Hereafter
He will be in the ranks
Of those who have lost
(All spiritual good).

86. How shall God
Guide those who reject
Faith after they accepted it
And bore witness
That the Apostle was true
And that Clear Signs
Had come unto them ?
But God guides not
A people unjust.

87. Of such the reward
Is that on them (rests)

٨٣- قُلْ أَمَّا بِاللهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ
وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ
وَالنَّبِيُّونَ
مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ
بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ
وَ نَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ○

٨٥- وَمَنْ يَسْتَغِ
عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا
فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ
وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ○

٨٦- كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللهُ قَوْمًا
كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ
وَشَهِدُوا
أَنَّ الرُّسُولَ حَقٌّ
وَجَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ
وَاللهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٨٧- أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاءُ هُمْ

418. The Muslim position is clear. The Muslim does not claim to have a religion peculiar to himself. Islam is not a sect or an ethnic religion. In its view all Religion is one, for the Truth is one. It was the religion preached by all the earlier Prophets. It was the truth taught by all the inspired Books. In essence it amounts to a consciousness of the Will and Plan of God and a joyful submission to that Will and Plan. If any one wants a religion other than that, he is false to his own nature, as he is false to God's Will and Plan. Such a one cannot expect guidance, for he has deliberately renounced guidance.

The curse of God,
Of His angels,
And of all mankind ;—

88. In that will they dwell ;
Nor will their penalty
Be lightened, nor respite
Be their (lot) ;—^{418-A}

89. Except for those that repent
(Even) after that,
And make amends ;
For verily God
Is Oft-Forgiving,
Most Merciful.

90. But those who reject
Faith after they accepted it,
And then go on adding
To their defiance of Faith,—
Never will their repentance
Be accepted ; for they
Are those who have
(Of set purpose) gone astray.

91. As to those who reject
Faith, and die rejecting,—
Never would be accepted
From any such as much
Gold as the earth contains,
Though they should offer it
For ransom. For such
Is (in store) a penalty grievous,
And they will find no helpers.

أَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝

٨٨- خُلِدُوا فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ
عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُونَ ۝

٨٩- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا
مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
وَأَصْلَحُوا ۖ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٩٠- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ
ثُمَّ أَرَادُوا كُفْرًا
لَنْ تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ ۖ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ ۝

٩١- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا
فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ
مِثْلُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ افْتَدَى بِهِ ۚ
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۖ
وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ۝

SECTION 10.

92. **B**y no means shall ye
Attain righteousness unless
Ye give (freely) of that ⁴¹⁹
Which ye love ; and whatever
Ye give, of a truth
God knoweth it well.

٩٢- كُنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا حُبُّونَهُ
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ۝

93. **A**ll food was lawful
To the Children of Israel,
Except what Israel ⁴²⁰
Made unlawful for itself,
Before the Law (of Moses)
Was revealed. Say :
"Bring ye the Law
And study it,
If ye be men of truth."

٩٣- كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حَلَالًا لِبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ
إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَءِيلُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةُ
قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِالتَّوْرَةِ فَاتْلَوْهَا
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

94. If any, after this, invent
A lie and attribute it
To God, they are indeed
Unjust wrong-doers.

٩٤- فَمَنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ
ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ۝

95. Say : " God speaketh
The Truth : follow
The religion of Abraham,
The sane in faith ; he
Was not of the Pagans." ⁴²¹

٩٥- قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ
فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا
وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

96. **T**he first House (of worship)
Appointed for men
Was that at Bakka : ⁴²²
Full of blessing

٩٦- إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ
لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا

419. The test of charity is: do you give something that you value greatly, something that you love? If you give your life in a Cause, that is the greatest gift you can give. If you give yourself, that is, your personal efforts, your talents, your skill, your learning, that comes next in degree. If you give your earnings, your property, your possessions, that is also a great gift; for many people love them even more than other things. And there are less tangible things, such as position, reputation, the well-being of those we love, the regard of those who can help us, etc. It is unselfishness that God demands, and there is no act of unselfishness, however small or intangible, but is well within the knowledge of God.

420. The Arabs ate the flesh of the camel, which is lawful in Islam, but it was prohibited by the Jewish Law of Moses (Leviticus xi, 4). But that Law was very strict because of the "hardness of heart" of Israel, because of Israel's insolence and iniquity (Q. vi. 146). Before it was promulgated Israel was free to choose its own food. I take "Israel" here to stand for the people of Israel.

421. The greater freedom of Islam in the matter of the ceremonial law, compared with the Mosaic Law, is not a reproach but recommendation. We go back to an older source than Judaism,—the institutions of Abraham. By common consent his Faith was sound, and he was certainly not a Pagan, a term contemptuously applied to the Arabs by the Jews.

422. *Bakka* : same as Mecca ; perhaps an older name. The foundation of the Ka'ba goes back to Abraham, but there are place associations in the sacred territory with the names of Adam and Eve, e.g., at 'Arafât, the Mount of Mercy (see n. 217 to ii. 197).

And of guidance
For all kinds of beings : ⁴²³

97. In it are Signs
Manifest ; (for example),
The Station of Abraham ; ⁴²⁴
Whoever enters it
Attains security ; ⁴²⁵
Pilgrimage thereto is a duty
Men owe to God,—
Those who can afford
The journey ; but if any
Deny faith, God stands not
In need of any of His creatures.
98. Say : “ O People of the Book !
Why reject ye the Signs
Of God, when God
Is Himself witness
To all ye do ? ”
99. Say : “ O ye People of the Book !
Why obstruct ye
Those who believe,
From the Path of God,
Seeking to make it crooked,
While ye were yourselves
Witnesses (to God's Covenant)? ⁴²⁶
But God is not unmindful
Of all that ye do.”
100. O ye who believe !
If ye listen
To a faction
Among the People of the Book,
They would (indeed)
Render you apostates
After ye have believed !
101. And how would ye
Deny Faith while unto you
Are rehearsed the Signs
Of God, and among you

وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ۝

٩٧- فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا
وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حُجَّةُ الْبَيْتِ
مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا
وَمَنْ كَفَرَ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

٩٨- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ
لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَى مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

٩٩- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ
لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
مَنْ آمَنَ تَبِعُونَهَا عِوَجًا
وَأَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ
وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

١٠٠- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
إِنْ تُطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا
مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
يَرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفْرًا ۝

١٠١- وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ
وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَفِيكُمْ

423. 'Alamin : all the worlds (i. 2, n.) ; all kinds of beings ; all nations (iii, 42) ; all creatures (iii, 9)

424. Station of Abraham : see ii, 125 and n. 125.

425. See reference in last note.

426. Cf. iii, 81.

Lives the Apostle?
Whoever holds
Firmly to God
Will be shown
A Way that is straight.

رَسُولُهُ وَمَنْ يَتَصَحَّمْ بِاللَّهِ
فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ٥

SECTION 11.

102. **﴿٥﴾** ye who believe!
Fear God as He should be ⁴²⁷
Feared, and die not
Except in a state ⁴²⁸
Of Islam.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ
إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ٥

103. And hold fast,
All together, by the Rope ⁴²⁹
Which God (stretches out
For you), and be not divided
Among yourselves;
And remember with gratitude
God's favour on you;
For ye were enemies ⁴³⁰
And He joined your hearts
In love, so that by His Grace,
Ye became brethren;
And ye were on the brink
Of the Pit of Fire,
And He saved you from it.
Thus doth God make
His Signs clear to you:
That ye may be guided.

وَاغْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا
وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ
فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا
وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ
فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ٥

104. Let there arise out of you
A band of people
Inviting to all that is good,
Enjoining what is right,

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ
وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

427. Fear is of many kinds : (1) the abject fear of the coward ; (2) the fear of a child or an inexperienced person in the face of an unknown danger ; (3) the fear of a reasonable man who wishes to avoid harm to himself or to people whom he wishes to protect ; (4) the reverence which is akin to love, for it fears to do anything which is not pleasing to the object of love. The first is unworthy of man ; the second is necessary for one spiritually immature ; the third is a manly precaution against evil as long as it is unconquered ; and the fourth is the seed bed of righteousness. Those mature in faith cultivate the fourth ; at earlier stages, the third or the second may be necessary ; they are fear, but not the fear of God. The first is a feeling of which anyone should be ashamed.

428. Our whole being should be permeated with Islam ; it is not a mere veneer or outward show.

429. The simile is that of people struggling in deep water, to whom a benevolent Providence stretches out a strong and unbreakable rope of rescue. If all hold fast to it together, their mutual support adds to the chance of their safety.

430. Yathrib was torn with civil and tribal feuds and dissensions before the Apostle of God set his sacred feet on its soil. After that, it became the City of the Prophet, Medina, an unmatched Brotherhood, and the pivot of Islam. This poor quarrelsome world is a larger Yathrib : can we establish the sacred feet on its soil, and make it a new and larger Medina ?

And forbidding what is wrong :
They are the ones
To attain felicity. ⁴³¹

105. Be not like those
Who are divided
Amongst themselves
And fall into disputations
After receiving
Clear Signs :
For them
Is a dreadful Penalty,—

106. On the Day when .
Some faces will be (lit up
With) white, and some faces
Will be (in the gloom of) black : ⁴³²
To those whose faces
Will be black, (will be said) :
“ Did ye reject Faith
After accepting it ?
Taste then the Penalty
For rejecting Faith.”

107. But those whose faces
Will be (lit with) white,—
They will be in (the light
Of) God's mercy : therein
To dwell (for ever).

108. These are the Signs
Of God : We rehearse them
To thee in Truth :
And God means
No injustice to any
Of His creatures.

109. To God belongs all
That is in the heavens

وَيُنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ○

١٠٥- وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا
وَاخْتَلَفُوا
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ
وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ○

١٠٦- يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ
أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ
فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ○

١٠٧- وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ
فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

١٠٨- تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ
نُتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ○

١٠٩- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ

431. *Muflih, aflah, falah* : the root idea is attainment of desires ; happiness, in this world and the next ; success ; prosperity ; freedom from anxiety, care, or a disturbed state of mind ;—the opposite of *'aḡāb* in the next verse, which includes : failure ; misery ; punishment or penalty ; agony or anguish

The ideal Muslim community is happy, untroubled by conflicts or doubts, sure of itself, strong, united, and prosperous : because it invites to all that is good ; enjoins the right ; and forbids the wrong,—a master-stroke of description in three clauses.

432. The “face” (*wajh*) expresses our Personality, our inmost being. White is the colour of Light : to become white is to be illumined with Light, which stands for felicity, the rays of the glorious light of God. Black is the colour of darkness, sin, rebellion, misery ; removal from the grace and light of God. These are the Signs of heaven and hell. The standard of decision in all questions is the justice of God.

And on earth : to Him
Do all questions
Go back (for decision). ⁴³³

SECTION 12.

110. **¶** We are the best
Of Peoples, evolved
For mankind,
Enjoining what is right,
Forbidding what is wrong,
And believing in God, ⁴³⁴
If only the People of the Book
Had faith, it were best
For them : among them
Are some who have faith,
But most of them
Are perverted transgressors.
111. They will do you no harm,
Barring a trifling annoyance ;
If they come out to fight you,
They will show you their backs,
And no help shall they get.
112. Shame is pitched over them ⁴³⁵
(Like a tent) wherever
They are found,
Except when under a covenant
(Of protection) from God
And from men ; they draw
On themselves wrath from God,
And pitched over them
Is (the tent of) destitution.
This because they rejected
The Signs of God, and slew
The Prophets in defiance of
right ; ⁴³⁶

وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَرَأَى اللَّهُ تَرْجِعُ الْأُمُورَ ۝

۱۱۰- كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ
تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ
مِنْهُمْ الْتُؤْمِنُونَ
وَكَثَرَهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ۝

۱۱۱- لَنْ يَضُرُّوكُمْ إِلَّا أَذًى
وَلَنْ يُفَاتِكُمْ يُؤْتِكُمُ الْكَدْبَارُ
ثُمَّ لَا يَنْصُرُونَ ۝

۱۱۲- ضَرَبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدَّلَالَةُ أَيْنَ مَا تَقِفُوا
إِلَّا يَحْبِلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلُ مِنَ النَّاسِ
وَبَاءٌ وَبَغْضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَضَرَبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ
كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۝

433. Cf. ii. 210.

434. The logical conclusion to the evolution of religious history is a non-sectarian, non-racial non-doctrinal, universal religion, which Islam claims to be. For Islam is just submission to the Will of God. This implies (1) Faith, (2) doing right, being an example to others to do right, and having the power to see that the right prevails, (3) eschewing wrong, being an example to others to eschew wrong, and having the power to see that wrong and injustice are defeated. Islam therefore lives, not for itself, but for mankind. The People of the Book, if only they had faith, would be Muslims, for they have been prepared for Islam. Unfortunately there is Unfaith, but it can never harm those who carry the banner of Faith and Right, which must always be victorious.

435. *Dhuribat* ; I think there is a simile from the pitching of a tent. Ordinarily a man's tent is a place of tranquillity and honour for him. The tent of the wicked wherever they are found is ignominy, shame, and humiliation. It is pity from God or from men that gives them protection when their pride has a fall. Using the same simile of a tent in another way, their home will be destitution and misery.

436. Cf. iii. 21, n. 363.

This because they rebelled
And transgressed beyond bounds.

113. Not all of them are alike :
Of the People of the Book
Are a portion that stand
(For the right) ; they rehearse
The Signs of God all night long,
And then prostrate themselves ⁴³⁷
In adoration.

114. They believe in God
And the Last Day ;
They enjoin what is right,
And forbid what is wrong ;
And they hasten (in emulation)
In (all) good works :
They are in the ranks
Of the righteous.

115. Of the good that they do,
Nothing will be rejected
Of them ; for God knoweth well
Those that do right.

116. Those who reject Faith,—
Neither their possessions
Nor their (numerous) progeny
Will avail them aught against
God :
They will be Companions
Of the Fire,—dwelling
Therein (for ever). ⁴³⁸

117. What they spend
In the life
Of this (material) world
May be likened to a Wind
Which brings a nipping frost :
It strikes and destroys the harvest
Of men who have wronged

ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ○

١١٣- لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۚ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ
يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ
آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ ○

١١٤- يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ
وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ○

١١٥- وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُكْفَرُوا
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ○

١١٦- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ
أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ
مِنْ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۚ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

١١٧- مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُونَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ فِيهَا صِرٌّ
أَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ
قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَأَهْلَكَتْهُ ۚ

437. In Islam we respect sincere faith and true righteousness in whatever form they appear.

438. Cf. iii, 10.

Their own souls : it is not God
That hath wronged them, but
They wrong themselves.⁴³⁹

118. **❧** ye who believe !
Take not into your intimacy
Those outside your ranks :
They will not fail
To corrupt you. They
Only desire your ruin :
Rank hatred has already
Appeared from their mouths :
What their hearts conceal
Is far worse.
We have made plain
To you the Signs,
If ye have wisdom.

119. Ah ! ye are those
Who love them,
But they love you not,—
Though ye believe
In the whole of the Book.⁴⁴⁰
When they meet you,
They say, " We believe " :⁴⁴¹
But when they are alone,
They bite off the very tips
Of their fingers at you
In their rage. Say :
" Perish in your rage ;
God knoweth well
All the secrets of the heart."

120. If aught that is good
Befalls you, it grieves them ;
But if some misfortune
Overtakes you, they rejoice

وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَلَكِنْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةً مِنْ دُونِكُمْ
لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ
قَدْ بَدَأَ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ
وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ
قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

۱۱۹- هَآؤُنَظْمُ أَوْلَآءُ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ
وَإِذَا الْقَوْمُ قَالُوا آمَنَّا
وَإِذَا خَلَوْا
عَصَوْا عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا تَامِلٌ
مِنَ الْغَيْظِ قُلْ مُوتُوا بِغَيْظِكُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ

۱۲۰- إِنْ تَنْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ
وَإِنْ تُصِيبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا

439. False "spending" may be either in false "charity" or in having a "good time." For the man who resists God's purpose, neither of them is any good. The essence of charity is faith and love. Where these are wanting, charity is no charity. Some baser motive is there : ostentation, or even worse, getting a person into the giver's power by a pretence of charity : something that is connected with the life of this grasping, material world. What happens ? You expect a good harvest. But "while you think, good easy man, full surely your greatness is a-ripening," there comes a nipping frost, and destroys all your hopes. The frost is some calamity, or the fact that you are found out ! Or perhaps it is "High blown pride," as in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, ii 3. In your despair you may blame blind Fate or you may blame God ! Blind Fate does not exist, for there is God's Providence, which is just and good. The harm or injustice has come, not from God, but from your own soul. You wronged your soul, and it suffered the frost. Your base motive brought you no good : it may have reduced you to poverty, shame, and disgrace. All the brave show of the wicked in this life is but a wind charged with evil to themselves.

440. Islam gives you the complete revelation, "the whole of the Book," though partial revelations have come in all ages. (Cf. iii, 23, and n. 366.)

441. Cf. ii, 14.

At it. But if ye are constant
And do right,
Not the least harm
Will their cunning
Do to you ; for God
Compasseth round about
All that they do.

وَأِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا
لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

C. 58.—God's help comes to those who strive
iii. 121-148.) With firmness, as it did at Badr.

Much can be learnt from the misfortunes
At Uhud. It is not for us
To question God's Plan, which is full
Of wisdom and mercy for all. Our duty
Is to stand firm and unswerving,
To obey, and in steadfast courage
To persevere, to retrieve our mistakes,
Not in grief and despair, but in firm hope
In God and in contempt of pain and death.

SECTION 13.

121. Remember that morning
Thou didst leave
Thy household (early)
To post the Faithful
At their stations for battle : ⁴⁴²
And God heareth
And knoweth all things :

١٢١- وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ
تَبَوُّىَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ
وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

442. The battle of Uhud was a great testing time for the young Muslim community. Their mettle and the wisdom and strength of their Leader were shown in the battle of Badr (iii. 13 and note), in which the Meccan Pagans suffered a crushing defeat. The Meccans were determined to wipe off their disgrace and to annihilate the Muslims in Medina. To this end they collected a large force and marched to Medina. They numbered some 3,000 fighting men under Abū Sufyān, and they were so confident of victory that their women-folk came with them, and showed the most shameful savagery after the battle. To meet the threatened danger the Muslim Leader, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā, with his usual foresight, courage, and initiative, resolved to take his station at the foot of Mount Uhud, which dominates the city of Medina some three miles to the north. Early in the morning, on the 7th of Shawwāl, A.H. 3 (January, 625), he made his dispositions for battle. Medina winters are notoriously rigorous, but the warriors of Islam (700 to 1000 in number) were up early. A torrent bed (*Nu'ah*) was to their south, and the passes in the hills at their back were filled with 50 archers to prevent the enemy attack from the rear. The enemy were set the task of attacking the walls of Medina, with the Muslims at their rear. In the beginning the battle went well for the Muslims. The enemy wavered, but the Muslim archers, in disobedience of their orders, left their posts to join in the pursuit and share in the booty. There was also treachery on the part of 300 "Hypocrites" led by 'Abdullāh ibn Ubai, who deserted. The enemy took advantage of the opening left by the archers, and there was severe hand-to-hand fighting, in which numbers told in favour of the enemy. Many of the Companions and Helpers were killed. But there was no rout. Among the Muslim martyrs was the gallant Ḥamza, a brother of the Apostle's father. The graves of the martyrs are still shown at Uhud. The Apostle himself was wounded in his head and face, and one of his front teeth was knocked off. Had it not been for his firmness, courage, and coolness, all would have been lost. As it was, the Apostle, in spite of his wound, and many of the wounded Muslims, inspired by his example, returned to the field next day, and Abū Sufyān and his Meccan army thought it most prudent to withdraw. Medina was saved, but a lesson in faith, constancy, firmness, and steadfastness was learnt by the Muslims.

122. Remember two of your parties ⁴⁴³
 Meditated cowardice ;
 But God was their protector,
 And in God should the Faithful
 (Ever) put their trust.

123. God had helped you
 At Badr, when ye were
 A contemptible little force ;
 Then fear God ; thus
 May ye show your gratitude. ⁴⁴⁴

124. Remember thou saidst
 To the Faithful : " Is it not
 enough
 For you that God should help you
 With three thousand angels
 (Specially) sent down ? ⁴⁴⁵

125. "Yea,—if ye remain firm,
 And act aright, even if
 The enemy should rush here
 On you in hot haste,
 Your Lord would help you
 With five thousand angels
 Making a terrific onslaught." ⁴⁴⁶

126. God made it but a message
 Of hope for you, and an
 assurance
 To your hearts : (in any case)
 There is no help
 Except from God,
 The Exalted, the Wise : ⁴⁴⁷

١٢٢- اِذْ هَمَّتْ طَآئِفَتَيْنِ مِنْكُمْ
 اَنْ تَفْسَلَا ۚ وَاللّٰهُ وَلِيَهُمَا
 وَ عَلٰى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ○

١٢٣- وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِبَدْرِ
 وَاَنْتُمْ اَوْلٰٓئِكَ
 فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُشْكُرُونَ ○

١٢٤- اِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ
 اَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ
 بِثَلَاثَةِ اَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُنْزَلِيْنَ ○

١٢٥- بَلٰٓى اِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوا
 وَيَاٰتُوْكُمْ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ هٰذَا يُمِدُّكُمْ
 رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ اَلْفٍ
 مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِيْنَ ○

١٢٦- وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بُشْرٰى لَّكُمْ
 وَلِتَطْمَِٔنَّ قُلُوْبُكُمْ بِهِ
 وَمَا النَّصْرُ اِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ
 الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَكِيْمِ

443. The two parties wavering in their minds were probably the Banū Salma Khazrajī and the Banū Hāritha, but they rallied under the Apostle's inspiration. That incident shows that man may be weak, but if he allows his weak will to be governed by the example of men of God, he may yet retrieve his weakness.

444. Gratitude to God is not to be measured by words. It should show itself in conduct and life. If all the Muslims had learnt the true lesson from the victory at Badr, their archers would not have left the posts appointed for them, nor the two tribes mentioned in the last note ever wavered in their faith.

445. Read verse 124 with the following five verses, to get its full signification.

446. *Musawwibim* : this is the active voice of the verb, not to be confused with the passive voice in iii, 14, which has a different signification.

447. Whatever happens, whether there is a miracle or not, all help proceeds from God. Man should not be so arrogant as to suppose that his own resources will change the current of the world plan. God helps those who show constancy, courage, and discipline, and use all the human means at their disposal, not those who fold their hands and have no faith. But God's help is determined on considerations exalted far above our petty human motive, and by perfect wisdoms, of which we can have only faint glimpses.

127. That he might cut off
A fringe of the Unbelievers ⁴⁴⁸
Or expose them to infamy,
And they should then
Be turned back,
Frustrated of their purpose.

۱۲۷-لَيَقْطَعَنَّ طَرَفًا
مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
أَوْ يَكْبِتُنَّهُمْ فَيَنْقَلِبُوا خَائِبِينَ ۝

128. Not for thee, (but for God),
Is the decision :
Whether He turn in mercy
To them, or punish them ;
For they are indeed wrong-
doers. ⁴⁴⁹

۱۲۸-لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ
أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ
أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ۝

129. To God belongeth all
That is in the heavens
And on earth.
He forgiveth whom He pleaseth
And punisheth whom He pleaseth ;
But God is Oft-Forgiving,
Most Merciful.

۱۲۹-وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ
وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝

SECTION 14.

130. ۞ ye who believe !
Devour not Usury, ⁴⁵⁰
Doubled and multiplied ;
But fear God ; that
Ye may (really) prosper. ⁴⁵¹

۱۳۰-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا
أَضْعَافًا مُّضَاعَفَةً
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

131. Fear the Fire, which is prepared
For those who reject Faith :

۱۳۱-وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ
الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ۝

448. *A fringe of the Unbelievers* : an extremity, an end, either upper or lower. Here it may mean that the chiefs of the Meccan Pagans, who had come to exterminate the Muslims with such confidence, went back frustrated in their purpose. The shameless cruelty with which they and their women mutilated the Muslim corpses on the battle-field will stand recorded to their eternal infamy. Perhaps it also exposed their real nature to some of those who fought for them, e.g., Khālid ibn Walid, who not only accepted Islam afterwards, but became one of the most notable champions of Islam. He was with the Muslims in the conquest of Mecca, and later on, won distinguished honours in Syria and 'Irāq.

449. Uḥūd is as much a sign-post for Islam as Badr. For us in these latter days it carries an even greater lesson. God's help will come if we have faith, obedience, discipline, unity, and the spirit of acting in righteousness and justice. If we fail, His mercy is always open to us. But it is also open to our enemies, and those who seem to us His enemies. His Plan may be to bring sinners to repentance, and to teach us righteousness and wisdom through those who seem in our eyes to be rebellious or even defiant. There may be good in them that He sees and we do not,—a humbling thought that must lead to our own self-examination and self-improvement.

450. Cf. ii, 275 and note. The last verse spoke of forgiveness, even to enemies. If such mercy is granted by God to erring sinners, how much more is it incumbent on us, poor sinners to refrain from oppressing our fellow-beings in need, in matters of mere material and ephemeral wealth? Usury is the opposite extreme of charity, unselfishness, striving, and giving of ourselves in the service of God and of our fellow-men.

451. Real prosperity consists, not in greed, but in giving,—the giving of ourselves and of our substance in the cause of God and God's truth and in the service of God's creatures.

132. And obey God
And the Apostle;
That ye may obtain mercy.

۱۳۲- وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۝

133. Be quick in the race
For forgiveness from your Lord,
And for a Garden whose width
Is that (of the whole)
Of the heavens
And of the earth,⁴⁵²
Prepared for the righteous,—

۱۳۳- وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَجَنَّةٍ
عَرْضُهَا السَّمُوتُ وَالْأَرْضُ
أُجِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

134. Those who spend (freely),⁴⁵³
Whether in prosperity,
Or in adversity;
Who restrain anger,
And pardon (all) men;—
For God loves those
Who do good;—

۱۳۴- الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ
وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ
وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ
وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝

135. And those who,⁴⁵⁴
Having done something
To be ashamed of,
Or wronged their own souls,⁴⁵⁵
Earnestly bring God to mind,
And ask for forgiveness
For their sins,—
And who can forgive
Sins except God?—
And are never obstinate
In persisting knowingly
In (the wrong) they have done

۱۳۵- وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً
أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ
فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ
وَمَنْ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَلَمْ يَصِرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

452. The Fire (iii. 131) is, as always, contrasted with the Garden in a spiritual sense,—in other words, Hell contrasted with Heaven. Lest we should think that heaven is a sort of enclosed material Garden somewhere in the skies, we are told that its width alone is that of the whole of the heavens and the earth,—all the creation we can imagine. In other words our spiritual felicity covers not merely this or that part of our being, but all life and all existence. Who can measure its width, or length, or depth?

453. Another definition of the righteous (vv. 134-35). So far from grasping material wealth, they give freely of themselves and their substance, not only when they are well-off and it is easy for them to do so, but also when they are in difficulties, for other people may be in difficulties at the same time. They do not get ruffled in adversity, or get angry when other people behave badly, or their own good plans fail. On the contrary they redouble their efforts. For the charity—or good deed—is all the more necessary in adversity. And they do not throw the blame on others. Even where such blame is due and correction is necessary, their own mind is free from a sense of grievance, for they forgive and cover other men's faults. This as far as other people are concerned. But we may be ourselves at fault, and perhaps we brought some calamity on ourselves. The righteous man is not necessarily perfect. In such circumstances his behaviour is described in the next verse.

454. The righteous man, when he finds he has fallen into sin or error, does not whine or despair, but asks for God's forgiveness, and his faith gives him hope. If he is sincere, that means that he abandons his wrong conduct and makes amends.

455 Sin is a sort of oppression of ourselves by ourselves. This follows from the doctrine of personal responsibility, as opposed to that of blind fate or of an angry God or gods lying in wait for revenge or injury on mankind.

136. For such the reward
Is forgiveness from their Lord,
And Gardens with rivers
Flowing underneath,—
An eternal dwelling :
How excellent a recompense
For those who work (and strive) !

137. Many were the Ways of
Life ⁴⁵⁶

That have passed away
Before you : travel through
The earth, and see what was
The end of those
Who rejected Truth.

138. Here is a plain statement]
To men, a guidance
And instruction to those
Who fear God !

139. So lose not heart,
Nor fall into despair :
For ye must gain mastery
If ye are true in Faith.

140. If a wound hath touched you, ⁴⁵⁷
Be sure a similar wound
Hath touched the others.
Such days (of varying fortunes)
We give to men and men
By turns : that God may know
Those that believe,
And that he may take
To Himself from your ranks
Martyr-witnesses (to Truth).
And God loveth not
Those that do wrong.

١٣٦- أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ
مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَلَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ۝

١٣٧- قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ
فَسيْرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَانظُرُوا
كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝

١٣٨- هَٰذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ
وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

١٣٩- وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا
وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۝

١٤٠- إِنْ يَسْسِسْكُمْ قَوْمٌ
فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْصٌ مِّثْلُهُ
وَبَلَدُ الْأَيَّامِ نَدَاؤُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ
وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

456. Cf. Tennyson (In Memoriam): "Our little systems have their day. They have their day and cease to be: They are but broken lights of Thee. And Thou, O Lord! art more than they." Only God's Truth will last, and it will gain the mastery in the end. If there is defeat, we must not be dejected, lose heart, or give up the struggle. Faith means hope, activity, striving steadfastly on to the goal.

457. These general considerations apply in particular to the disaster at Uhud. (1) In a fight for truth, if you are hurt, be sure the adversary has suffered hurt also, the more so as he has no faith to sustain him. (2) Success or failure in this world comes to all at varying times; we must not grumble, as we do not see the whole of God's Plan. (3) Men's true mettle is known in adversity as gold is assayed in fire; Cf. also iii. 154, n. 467. (4) Martyrdom is in itself an honour and a privilege; how glorious is the fame of Hamza the Martyr, and in later times, of Hasan and Husain? (5) If there is any dross in us, it will be purified by resistance and struggle. (6) When evil is given rope a little, it works out its own destruction; the orgies of cruelty indulged in by the Pagans after what they supposed to be their victory at Uhud, filled up their cup of iniquity; it lost them the support and adherence of the best in their own ranks, and hastened the destruction of Paganism from Arabia. Cf. iii. 127 and n. 448.

141. God's object also is to purge ⁴⁵⁸
Those that are true in Faith
And to deprive of blessing
Those that resist Faith.

١٤١- وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

142. Did ye think that ye
Would enter Heaven ⁴⁵⁹
Without God testing
Those of you who fought hard
(In His Cause) and
Remained steadfast ?

١٤٢- أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ
وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ
وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ ○

143. Ye did indeed
Wish for Death
Before ye met him :
Now ye have seen him
With your own eyes,
(And ye flinch !)

١٤٣- وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ
فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ۖ

SECTION 15.

144. Muhammad is no more ⁴⁶⁰
Than an Apostle : many
Were the Apostles that passed
away
Before him. If he died
Or were slain, will ye then
Turn back on your heels ?
If any did turn back
On his heels, not the least
Harm will he do to God ;
But God (on the other hand)
Will swiftly reward those
Who (serve him) with gratitude.

١٤٤- وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ
قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ
أَوْ قُتِلَ
انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَابِكُمْ
وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ
فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا
وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ○

145. Nor can a soul die
Except by God's leave,

١٤٥- وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

458. The purge or purification was in two senses. (1) It cleared out the Hypocrites from the ranks of the Muslim warriors. (2) The testing-time strengthened the faith of the weak and wavering ; for suffering has its own mission in life. The Apostle's example - wounded but staunch, and firmer than ever - put new life into the Community.

459. Cf. ii. 214.

460 This verse primarily applies to the battle of Uhud, in the course of which a cry was raised that the Apostle was slain. He had indeed been severely wounded, but Talha, Abū Bakr, and 'Alī were at his side, and his own unexampled bravery saved the Muslim army from a rout. This verse was recalled again by Abū Bakr when the Apostle actually died a natural death eight years later, to remind people that God, Whose Message he brought, lives for ever. And we have need to remember this now and often for two reasons : (1) when we feel inclined to pay more than human honour to one who was the truest, the purest, and the greatest of men, and thus in a sense to compound for our forgetting the spirit of his teaching, and (2) when we feel depressed at the chances and changes of time, and forget that the eternal God lives and watches over us and over all His creatures now as in all history in the past and in the future.

The term being fixed
As by writing. If any
Do desire a reward
In this life, We shall give it ⁴⁶¹
To him; and if any
Do desire a reward
In the Hereafter, We shall
Give it to him.
And swiftly shall We reward
Those that (serve us with)
gratitude.

146. How many of the Prophets
Fought (in God's way),
And with them (fought)
Large bands of godly men?
But they never lost heart
If they met with disaster
In God's way, nor did
They weaken (in will)
Nor give in. And God
Loves those who are
Firm and steadfast.

147. All that they said was :
"Our Lord! forgive us
Our sins and anything
We may have done
That transgressed our duty :
Establish our feet firmly,
And help us against
Those that resist
Faith."

148. And God gave them
A reward in this world,
And the excellent reward
Of the Hereafter. For God
Loveth those who do good.

كُتِبَ مُوَجَّلًا
وَمَنْ يُرِدْ
ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا
وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ
نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا
وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ ○

١٣٦- وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ نَبِيِّ قُتِلَ مَعَهُ
رَبِّيُّونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا
لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَمَا ضَعُفُوا
وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا
وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ ○

١٣٧- وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا
ذُنُوبَنَا وَاسْرِفْنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا
وَتَبَتِ أَقْدَامُنَا
وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○


١٣٨- فَإِنَّهُمْ اللَّهُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنِ
ثَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْحَسَنِينَ ○

C. 59.—Uḥud showed how dangerous it was
(iii. 149-180.) To lend ear to enemy suggestions,
To disobey orders, dispute, lose courage,
Or seek selfish ends; some even followed

461. There is a slight touch of irony in this. As applied to the archers at Uḥud, who deserted their posts for the sake of plunder, they might have got some plunder, but they put themselves and the whole of their army into jeopardy. For a little worldly gain, they nearly lost their souls. On the other hand, those who took the long view and fought with staunchness and discipline,—their reward was swift and sure. If they died, they got the crown of martyrdom. If they lived, they were heroes honoured in this life and the next.

The evil course of turning back.
 But great is God's mercy : where He helps,
 No harm can come. Trust your Leader.
 The Hypocrites, in withdrawing from battle
 Were really helping the Unbelievers,
 But glorious were those who knew
 No fear : those killed in the Cause of God
 Yet live and thrive and do rejoice ;
 And never can those who fight against Faith
 Hurt in the least the Cause of God.

SECTION 16.

149.  ye who believe !
 If ye obey the Unbelievers,
 They will drive you back
 On your heels, and ye
 Will turn back (from Faith)
 To your own loss.
150. Nay, God is your Protector,
 And He is the best of helpers.
151. Soon shall We cast terror
 Into the hearts of the Unbelievers,
 For that they joined companions
 With God, for which He had sent
 No authority : their abode
 Will be the Fire : and evil
 Is the home of the wrong-doers !
152. God did indeed fulfil
 His promise to you
 When ye with His permission
 Were about to annihilate
 Your enemy,—until ye flinched
 And fell to disputing
 About the order,⁴⁶²
 And disobeyed it
 After He brought you in sight
 (Of the Booty) which ye covet.
 Among you are some
 That hanker after this world
 And some that desire
 The Hereafter. Then did He

١٤٩- يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اِنْ تُطِيعُوا الَّذِيْنَ
 كَفَرُوْا يَرُدُّوْكُمْ عَلٰى اٰعْقَابِكُمْ
 فَتَنْقَلِبُوْا خٰسِرِيْنَ ۝

١٥٠- بَلِ اللّٰهُ مَوْلٰىكُمْ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النَّٰصِرِيْنَ ۝

١٥١- سَنُلْقِيْ فِيْ قُلُوْبِ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا الرُّعْبَ
 بِمَا اَشْرَكُوْا بِاللّٰهِ
 مَا لَمْ يُنْزَلْ بِهِ سُلْطٰنًا ۚ وَمَا وَّوْهَمُ الشَّٰرِطُ
 وَبَشِّرِ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝

١٥٢- وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَعْدًا اِذْ
 تَحْسَبُوْنَهُمْ يٰۤاَذِيْهِ ۚ حَتّٰى اِذَا فُشِلْتُمْ
 وَتَنٰازَعْتُمْ فِيْ الْاَمْرِ
 وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَاۤ اَرٰىكُمْ مَّا
 تُحِبُّوْنَ
 مِنْكُمْ مَّنۢ يُّرِيْدُ الدُّنْيَا
 وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنۢ يُّرِيْدُ الْاٰخِرَةَ ۚ

462. The order was, not to run after booty, but strictly to maintain discipline. Uhud was in the beginning a victory for the Muslims. Many of the enemy were slain, and they were retiring when a part of the Muslims, against orders, ran in pursuit, attracted by the prospects of booty. See note to iii, 121.

Divert you from your foes
In order to test you.⁴⁶³
But He forgave you :
For God is full of grace
To those who believe.

153. Behold ! ye were climbing up
The high ground, without even
Casting a side glance
At any one, and the Apostle
In your rear was calling you
Back. There did God give you
One distress after another
By way of requital,⁴⁶⁴
To teach you not to grieve
For (the booty) that had escaped
you
And for (the ill) that had befallen
you.
For God is well aware
Of all that ye do.

154. After (the excitement)
Of the distress, He sent down
Calm on a band of you
Overcome with slumber,⁴⁶⁵
While another band
Was stirred to anxiety
By their own feelings,
Moved by wrong suspicions
Of God—suspicions due
To Ignorance. They said :
“ What affair is this of ours ? ”⁴⁶⁶
Say thou : “ Indeed, this affair

ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ
عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

١٥٣- إِنْ تَصْعَدُونَ
وَلَا تَنْظُرُونَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ
يَدْعُوَكُمْ فِي أَخْرَابِكُمْ
فَأَنَابَكُمْ عَمَّا بَعَثَ
لِكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوا
عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ
وَلَا مَا آصَابَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٥٤- ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ
أَمْنَةً نَاعَسًا يَغْشَى طَائِفَةً مِنْكُمْ
وَطَائِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ
يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ
يَقُولُونَ هَلْ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ

463. The disobedience seemed at first pleasant : they were chasing the enemy, and there was the prospect of booty. But when the gap was noticed by the enemy, they turned the flank round the hill and nearly overwhelmed the Muslims. Had it not been for God's grace, and the firmness of their Leader and his immediate Companions, they would have been finished.

464. It would seem that a party of horsemen led by the dashing Khālid ibn Walid came through the gap in the passes where the Muslim archers should have been, and in the confusion that arose, the retreating foe rallied and turned back on the Muslims. From the low ground on the bank of the Nullah the Muslims retreated in their turn and tried to gain the hill. They had a double loss : (1) they were baulked of the booty they had run after, and (2) their own lives and the lives of their whole army were in danger, and many lives were actually lost from their ranks. Their own lives being in danger, they had hardly time to grieve for the loss of booty or the general calamity. But it steadied them, and some of them stood the test.


465. After the first surprise, when the enemy turned on them, a great part of the Muslims did their best, and seeing their mettle, the enemy withdrew to his camp. There was a lull ; the wounded had rest ; those who had fought the hard fight were visited by kindly Sleep, sweet Nature's nurse. In contrast to them was the band of Hypocrites, whose behaviour is described in the next note.

466. The Hypocrites withdrew from the fighting. Apparently they had been among those who had been counselling the defence of Medina within the walls instead of boldly coming out to meet the enemy. Their distress was caused by their own mental state : the sleep of the just was denied them ; and they continued to murmur of what might have been. Only fools do so ; wise men face actualities.

Is wholly God's." They hide
In their minds what they
Dare not reveal to thee.
They say (to themselves) :
" If we had had anything
To do with this affair,
We should not have been
In the slaughter here."
Say : " Even if you had remained
In your homes, those
For whom death was decreed
Would certainly have gone forth
To the place of their death " ;
But (all this was) ⁴⁶⁷
That God might test
What is in your breasts
And purge what is
In your hearts.
For God knoweth well
The secrets of your hearts.

155. Those of you ⁴⁶⁸
Who turned back
On the day the two hosts
Met,—it was Satan
Who caused them to fail,
Because of some (evil)
They had done. But God
Has blotted out (their fault) :
For God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Forbearing.

SECTION 17.

156.  ye who believe !
Be not like the Unbelievers,
Who say of their brethren,
When they are travelling
Through the earth or engaged
In fighting : " If they had stayed
With us, they would not
Have died, or been slain. "

كَلَّا لِلّٰهِ يُخْفُونَ فِيْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ
مَا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ يَقُولُوْنَ
لَوْ كَانْ لَنَا مِنْ اَمْرِ شَيْءٍ
مَا قَتَلْنَا هٰهُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ
فِيْ بُيُوتِكُمْ
لَبَرَزَ الَّذِيْنَ كَتَبَ عَلَيْهِمُ
الْقَتْلُ اِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ
وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللّٰهُ مَا فِيْ صُدُوْرِكُمْ
وَلِيَمْحَصَّ مَا فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ
وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ بِذٰاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ۝

١٥٥- اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى
الْجَمْعَانِ اِنَّهُمْ اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ
بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوْا
وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ۝

١٥٦- يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ
كَفَرُوْا وَقَالُوْا اِلٰهٰؤُنَّاهُمْ
اِذَا ضَرَبُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ اَوْ كَانُوْا غُرًى
لَّوْ كَانُوْا عِنْدَنَا مَا مَاتُوْا وَمَا قُتِلُوْا ۝

467. That testing by God is not in order that it may add to His knowledge, for He knows all. It is in order to help us subjectively, to mould our will, and purge us of any grosser motives, that will be searched out by calamity. If it is a hardened sinner, the test brings conviction out of his own self. Cf. also iii. 140.

468. It was the duty of all who were able to fight, to fight in the sacred cause at Uhud. But a small section were timid : they were not quite as bad as those who railed against God, or those who thoughtlessly disobeyed orders. But they still failed in their duty. It is our inner motives that God regards. These timorous people were forgiven by God. Perhaps they were given another chance : perhaps they rose to it and did their duty then.

This that God may make it
A cause of sighs and regrets
In their hearts. It is God
That gives Life and Death,⁴⁶⁹
And God sees well
All that ye do.

157. And if ye are slain, or die,
In the way of God,
Forgiveness and mercy
From God are far better
Than all they could amass.⁴⁷⁰

158. And if ye die, or are slain,
Lo ! it is unto God
That ye are brought together.

159. It is part of the Mercy
Of God that thou dost deal
Gently with them.⁴⁷¹
Wert thou severe
Or harsh-hearted,
They would have broken away
From about thee : so pass over
(Their faults), and ask
For (God's) forgiveness
For them ; and consult
Them in affairs (of moment).
Then, when thou hast
Taken a decision,
Put thy trust in God.

لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَارُ وَيُؤَيِّتُ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ○

١٥٧- وَلَئِنْ قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
أَوْ مُتُّمْ لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَكْتُمُونَ ○

١٥٨- وَلَئِنْ مَّتُّمْ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ
لَا إِلَى اللَّهِ تُخْشَرُونَ ○

١٥٩- فِيمَا رَحِمَهُ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَئِنْ لَّهُمْ
وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ
لَا نَقَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ
فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ
وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ
وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ
فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

469. It is want of faith that makes people afraid (1) of meeting death, (2) of doing their duty when it involves danger, as in travelling in order to earn an honest living, or fighting in a sacred cause. Such fear is part of the punishment for want of faith. If you have faith, there is no fear in meeting death, for it brings you nearer to your goal, nor in meeting danger for a sufficient cause, because you know that the keys of life and death are in God's hands. Nothing can happen without God's Will. If it is God's Will that you should die, your staying at home will not save you. If it is His Will that you should live, the danger you incur in a just cause brings you glory. Supposing it is His Will that you should lose your life in the danger, there are three considerations that would make you eager to meet it : (1) dying in doing your duty is the best means of reaching God's Mercy ; (2) the man of faith knows that he is not going to an unknown country of which he has no news ; he is going nearer to God ; and (3) he is being "brought together" unto God ; i.e., he will meet all his dear ones in faith : instead of the separation which the souls without faith fear, he looks forward to a surer reunion than is possible in this life.

470. Notice a beautiful little literary touch here. At first sight you would expect the second person here ("you could amass"), to match the second person in the earlier clause. But remember that the second person in earlier clause refers to the man of faith, and the third person in the last line refers to the Unbelievers ; as if it said : "Of course you as a man of faith would not be for hoarding riches : your wealth,—duty and the mercy of God,—is far more precious than anything the Unbelievers can amass in their selfish lives."

471. The extremely gentle nature of Muhammad endeared him to all, and it is reckoned as one of the Mercies of God. One of the Apostle's titles is "A Mercy to all Creation." At no time was this gentleness, this mercy, this long-suffering with human weaknesses, more valuable than after a disaster like that at Uhud. It is a God-like quality, which then, as always, bound and binds the souls of countless men to him.

For God loves those
Who put their trust (in Him).

160. If God helps you,
None can overcome you :
If He forsakes you,
Who is there, after that,
That can help you ?
In God, then,
Let Believers put their trust.

161. No prophet could (ever)⁴⁷²
Be false to his trust.
If any person is so false,
He shall, on the Day
Of Judgment, restore
What he misappropriated ;
Then shall every soul
Receive its due,—
Whatever it earned,—
And none shall be
Dealt with unjustly.

162. Is the man who follows
The good pleasure of God
Like the man who draws
On himself the wrath
Of God, and whose abode
Is in Hell ?—
A woeful refuge !

163. They are in varying grades
In the sight of God,
And God sees well
All that they do.

164. God did confer
A great favour

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ○

١٦٠- إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ
وَإِنْ يَخْذُلْكُمْ
فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ
وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ○

١٦١- وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ
وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ
يَأْتِ بِمَا غُلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى
كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ○

١٦٢- أَفَمَنْ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانُ اللَّهِ
كَمَنْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ
وَيَتَّبِعُ النَّصِيرُ ○

١٦٣- هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ بِصِيرِكُمْ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٦٤- لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ

⁴⁷². Besides the gentleness of his nature. Mustafā was known from his earliest life for his trustworthiness. Hence his title of *Al-Amīn*. Unscrupulous people often read their own low motives into other men, and their accusation, which is meant to injure, fastens on the various virtues for which the man they attack is well known. Some of the Hypocrites after Uhud raised some doubts about the division of the spoils, thinking to sow the seeds of poison in the hearts of the men who had deserted their posts in their craving for booty. Those low suspicions were never believed in by any sensible people, and they have no interest for us now. But the general principles here declared are of eternal value. (1) Men of God do not act from unworthy motives. (2) Those who act from such motives are spiritually the lowest of creatures, and they will make no profit. (3) A man of God is not to be judged by the same standard as a greedy creature. (4) In God's eyes there are various grades of men, and we must try to understand and appreciate such grades. If we trust our Leader, we shall not question his honesty without cause. If he is dishonest, he is not fit to be a leader.

On the Believers ⁴⁷³
 When He sent among them
 An Apostle from among
 Themselves, rehearsing
 Unto them the Signs
 Of God, sanctifying them,
 And instructing them
 In Scripture and Wisdom,
 While, before that,
 They had been
 In manifest error.

165. ~~What~~ What! When a single
 Disaster smites you,
 Although ye smote (your enemies)
 With one twice as great,
 Do ye say?—
 "Whence is this?"
 Say (to them):
 "It is from yourselves:
 For God hath power
 Over all things." ⁴⁷⁴

166. What ye suffered
 On the day the two armies
 Met, was with the leave
 Of God, in order that
 He might test ⁴⁷⁵ the Believers,—

167. And the Hypocrites also. ⁴⁷⁶
 These were told: "Come,
 Fight in the way of God,
 Or (at least) drive
 (The foe from your city)."
 They said: "Had we known
 How to fight, we should
 Certainly have followed you."

عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ
 رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ
 يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ
 وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
 وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ
 لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ○

١٦٥- أَوَلَيْسَ أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ
 قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ فَمِثْلَهَا
 قُلْتُمْ أَنَّى هَذَا
 قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ○

١٦٦- وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ
 فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
 وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

١٦٧- وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ
 تَعَالَوْا فَانْقُرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
 أَوْ ادْعُوا
 قَالُوا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَا اتَّبَعُكُمْ

473. Cf. ii. 151.

474. If Uhud was a reverse to the Muslims, they had inflicted a reverse twice as great on the Meccans at Badr. This reverse was not without God's permission, for He wanted to test and purify the faith of those who followed Islam, and to show them that they must strive and do all in their power to deserve God's help. If they disobeyed orders and neglected discipline, they must attribute the disaster to themselves and not to God.

475. Test: literally know. See n. 467 to iii, 154.

476. The testing of the Hypocrites was the searching out of their motives and exposing them to the sight of their brethren, who might otherwise have been taken in. In the first place they gave counsels of caution: in their minds it was nothing but cowardice. In the second place, what they wished was not the good of the community but its being placed in a contemptible position. When others were for self-sacrifice, they were for ease and fair words. Pretending to be Muslims, they were nearer to Unbelief. Ironically they pretended to know nothing of fighting, and left their devout brethren to defend their faith and ideals. If that devout spirit did not appeal to them, they might at least have defended their city of Medina when it was threatened,—defended their hearths and homes as good citizens.

They were that day
Nearer to Unbelief
Than to Faith,
Saying with their lips
What was not in their hearts.
But God hath full knowledge
Of all they conceal.

168. (They are) the ones that say,
(Of their brethren slain),
While they themselves
Sit (at ease) : " If only
They had listened to us,
They would not have been slain."
Say : " Avert death
From your own selves,
If ye speak the truth."

169. Think not of those
Who are slain in God's way
As dead. Nay, they live,⁴⁷⁷
Finding their sustenance
In the Presence of their Lord ;

170. They rejoice in the Bounty
Provided by God :
And with regard to those
Left behind, who have not
Yet joined them (in their bliss),
The (Martyrs) glory in the fact
That on them is no fear,
Nor have they (cause to) grieve.⁴⁷⁸

171. They glory in the Grace
And the Bounty from God,
And in the fact that
God suffereth not

هُمْ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ
يَقُولُونَ يَا أَقْوَاهِهِمْ
مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ ۝

١٦٨- الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِرِجْوَانِهِمْ
وَقَعْدُوا لَوْ اطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا
قُلْ قَادَرَةٌ عَلٰى أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتُ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

١٦٩- وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا
بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ۝

١٧٠- فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ
بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ
أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

١٧١- يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّهِمْ وَاللَّهُ وَفَّيْلٌ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ

477. A beautiful passage about the Martyrs in the cause of Truth. They are not dead : they live,—and in a far higher and deeper sense than in the life they have left. Even those who have no faith in the Hereafter honour those that die in their cause, with the crown of immortality in the minds and memories of generations unborn. But in Faith we see a higher, truer, and less relative immortality. Perhaps "immortality" is not the right word in this connection, as it implies a continuation of this life. In their case, through the gateway of death, they enter the true real Life, as opposed to its shadow here. Our carnal life is sustained with carnal food, and its joys and pleasures at their best are those which are projected on the screen of this material world. Their real Life is sustained from the ineffable Presence and Nearness of God. Cf. ii. 154, and see how the idea is further developed here.

478. The Martyrs not only rejoice at the bliss they have themselves attained. The dear ones left behind are in their thoughts : it is part of their glory that they have saved their dear ones from fear, sorrow, humiliation, and grief, in this life, even before they come to share in the glories of the Hereafter.

Note how they refrain : "on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve" : comes in here with a new and appropriate meaning. Besides other things, it means that the dear ones have no cause to grieve at the death of the Martyrs ; rather have they cause to rejoice.

The reward of the Faithful
To be lost (in the least).

SECTION 18.

172. **Of** those who answered
The call of God
And the Apostle,
Even after being wounded, ⁴⁷⁹
Those who do right
And refrain from wrong
Have a great reward ;—

173. Men said to them :
“ A great army is gathering
Against you ” :
And frightened them :
But it (only) increased
Their Faith : they said :
“ For us God sufficeth,
And He is the best
Disposer of affairs. ”

174. And they returned
With Grace and Bounty
From God : no harm
Ever touched them :
For they followed
The good pleasure of God :
And God is the Lord
Of bounties unbounded.

175. **It** is only the Evil One
That suggests to you
The fear of his votaries :
Be ye not afraid
Of them, but fear Me,
If ye have Faith.

176. Let not those grieve thee
Who rush headlong
Into Unbelief :
Not the least harm
Will they do to God :
God's Plan is that He

لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

١٤٢- الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ
لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا
أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

١٤٣- الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لَهُمُ النَّاسُ
إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ
فَاخْشَوْهُمْ
فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا ۝

وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ۝
١٤٤- فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ
لَمْ يَمَسَّ لَهُمْ سُوءٌ
وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝

١٤٥- إِنَّمَا ذَلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ
فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ
وَخَافُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

١٤٦- وَلَا يَحْزَنُكَ الَّذِينَ يَسَارِعُونَ فِي
الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا
يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ

479. After the confusion at Uhud, men rallied round the Apostle. He was wounded, and they were wounded, but they were all ready to fight again. Abū Sufyān with his Meccans withdrew, but left a challenge with them to meet him and his army again at the fair of Badr Suḡrā next year. The challenge was accepted, and a picked band of Muslims under their intrepid Leader kept the tryst, but the enemy did not come. They returned, not only unharmed, but enriched by the trade at the fair, and (it may be presumed) strengthened by the accession of new adherents to their cause.

Will give them no portion
In the Hereafter,
But a severe punishment.

177. Those who purchase
Unbelief at the price
Of faith,—
Not the least harm
Will they do to God,
But they will have
A grievous punishment.
178. Let not the Unbelievers
Think that Our respite
To them is good for themselves :
We grant them respite
That they may grow ⁴⁸⁰
In their iniquity :
But they will have
A shameful punishment.
179. God will not leave
The Believers in the state
In which ye are now,
Until He separates
What is evil
From what is good. ⁴⁸¹
Nor will He disclose
To you the secrets
Of the Unseen. ⁴⁸²
But He chooses
Of His Apostles
(For the purpose)
Whom He pleases.
So believe in God
And His Apostles :
And if ye believe
And do right,
Ye have a reward
Without measure.

أَلَا يَجْعَلُ لَهُمْ حَظًّا فِي الْآخِرَةِ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ٥

١٧٧- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا

الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ

لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا

وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

١٧٨- وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

أَنَّمَا تُنَبِّئُ لَهُمْ خَيْرًا لَّا يُفْسِدُهُمْ

إِنَّمَا تُنَبِّئُ لَهُمْ لِيُزِدُوا إِثْمًا

وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ٥

١٧٩- مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ

حَتَّىٰ يَسِيرَ الْخَبِيثُ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ

لِيُظْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ

يَجْتَنِي مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

فَأْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا

وَتَقْتُلُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ٥

480. That the cup of their iniquity may be full. The appetite for sin grows with what it feeds on. The natural result is that the sinner sinks deeper into sin. If there is any freedom of will, this naturally follows, though God's Grace is always ready for the repentant. If the Grace is rejected, the increase of iniquity makes the nature of iniquity plainer to those who might otherwise be attracted by its glitter. The working of God's Law is therefore both just and merciful. See also the next verse.

481. The testing of good men by calamities and evil men by leaving them in the enjoyment of good things is part of the Universal Plan, in which some freedom of choice is left to man. The psychological and subjective test is unfailing, and the separation is effected partly by the operation of the human wills, to which some freedom is allowed. But it must be effected, if only in the interests of the good.

482. Man in his weak state would be most miserable if he could see the secrets of the Future or the secrets of the Unseen. But things are revealed to him from time to time, as may be expedient for him, by Apostles chosen for the purpose. Our duty is to hold fast by faith and lead a good life.

180. And let not those
Who covetously withhold
Of the gifts which God
Hath given them of His Grace.⁴⁸³
Think that it is good for them :
Nay, it will be the worse
For them : soon shall the things
Which they covetously withheld
Be tied to their necks
Like a twisted colour,⁴⁸⁴
On the Day of Judgment.
To God belongs the heritage⁴⁸⁵
Of the heavens and the earth ;
And God is well-acquainted
With all that ye do.

١٨٠- وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ
يَتَّخِلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
هُوَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ
بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ
مَا بَلَغُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
وَاللَّهُ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ۝

C. 60.—Regard, unmoved, the taunts of those
(iii. 181-200.) Who laugh at faith ; nor let their falsehood
Nor their seeming prosperity, raise
Questions in your minds. All
Who can read the signs of God in Nature
Know His wisdom, goodness, power,
And justice. They know His promise
Is sure, and in humble prayer,
Wholly put their trust in Him.

SECTION 19.

181. God hath heard
The taunt of those
Who say : " Truly, God⁴⁸⁶
Is indigent and we
Are rich !"—We shall
Certainly record their word

١٨١- لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ
قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ
وَمَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءَ سَتَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا

483. The gifts are of all kinds : material gifts, such as wealth, property, strength of limbs, etc., or intangible gifts, such as influence, birth in a given set, intellect, skill, insight, etc. or spiritual gifts of the highest kind. The spending of all these things (apart from what is necessary for ourselves) for those who need them, is charity, and purifies our own character. The withholding of them (apart from our needs) is similarly greed and selfishness, and is strongly condemned.

484. By an apt metaphor the miser is told that his wealth or the other gifts which he hoarded will cling round his neck and do him no good. He will wish he could get rid of them, but he will not be able to do so. According to the Biblical phrase in another connection they will hang like a millstone round his neck (Matt. xviii. 6). The metaphor here is fuller. He hugged his wealth or his gifts about him. They will become like a heavy collar, the badge of slavery, round his neck. They will be tied tight and twisted, and they will give him pain and anguish instead of pleasure. Cf. also xvii. 13.

485. Another metaphor is now introduced. Material wealth or property is only called ours during our short life here ; it then descends to heirs and heirs until it goes to the ultimate heir, the State. So all gifts are ours in trust only ; they ultimately revert to God, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens or on earth.

486. In ii. 245 we read : " Who is he that will loan to God a beautiful loan ?" In other places charity or spending in the way of God is metaphorically described as giving to God. The holy Apostle often used that expression in appealing for funds to be spent in the way of God. The scoffers mocked and said : " So God is indigent and we are rich !" This blasphemy was of a piece with all their conduct in history, in slaying the Prophets and men of God.

And (their act) of slaying
Their Prophets in defiance ⁴⁸⁷
Of right, and We shall say :
" Taste ye the Penalty
Of the Scorching Fire !

182. " This is because
Of the (unrighteous deeds)
Which your hands
Sent on before ye : ⁴⁸⁸
For God never harms
Those who serve Him."

183. They (also) said : " God took
Our promise not to believe
In an apostle unless
He showed us a sacrifice
Consumed by fire ⁴⁸⁹
(From heaven)." Say :
" There came to you
Apostles before me,
With Clear Signs
And even with what
Ye ask for : why then
Did ye slay them,
If ye speak the truth ? "

184. Then if they reject thee,
So were rejected apostles
Before thee, who came
With Clear Signs,
Books of dark prophecies,
And the Book of Enlightenment ⁴⁹⁰

وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ

وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ○

۱۸۲- ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْت أَيْدِيَكُمْ

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ

لَيْسَ بِظَالِمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ○

۱۸۳- الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عٰهَدَ إِلَيْنَا

أَلَّا نُؤْمِنَ لِرَسُولٍ

حَتَّى يَأْتِيَنَا بِقُرْبَانٍ تَأْكُلُهُ النَّارُ

قُلْ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّن قَبْلِي

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَإِلَّذِي قُلْتُمْ

فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ○

۱۸۴- فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ رَسُولٌ

مِّن قَبْلِكَ جَاءُوا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ

وَالْزُبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ ○

487. For the expression "slaying in defiance of right," Cf. iii. 21, and iii. 112.

488. Cf. ii. 95 and note.

489. Burnt sacrifices figured in the Mosaic Law, and in the religious ceremonies long before Moses but it is not true that the Mosaic Law laid down a fire from heaven on a burnt sacrifice as a test of the credentials of Prophets. Even if it had been so, did the Jews obey the Prophets who showed this Sign? In Leviticus ix. 23-24, we are told of a burnt offering prepared by Moses and Aaron : "and there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat." Yet the people rebelled frequently against Moses, and rebellion against a Prophet is spiritually an attempt to kill him. Abel's offering (sacrifice) was probably a burnt offering : it was accepted by God, and he was killed by Cain out of jealousy : Gen. iv. 3-8. Mosaic sacrifices were no longer needed by the people of Jesus or the people of Muhammad.

490. The three things mentioned in the Text are : (1) Clear Signs (*baiyināt*) ; (2) *zabūr*, and (3) *hikāb-il-Munīr*. The signification of (1) I have explained in the note to iii. 62, as far as they relate to Jesus. In a more general sense, it means the clear evidence which God's dealings furnish about a man of God having a true mission : e.g., Moses in relation to Pharaoh. I have translated (2) as Books of Dark Prophecies, as the root *zabara* implies something hard. The Commentators are not agreed, but the Prophetic writings which seemed to contemporaries difficult to understand may well come under this description. David's Psalms (*Zabūr*, iv. 163) may also come under this description. As to (3), there is no doubt about the literal meaning of the words, "the Book of Enlightenment." But what does it precisely refer to? I take it to mean the fundamental guide to conduct,—the clear rules laid down in all Dispensations to help men to lead good lives.

185. Every soul shall have
A taste of death : ⁴⁹¹
And only on the Day
Of Judgment shall you
Be paid your full recompense.
Only he who is saved
Far from the Fire
And admitted to the Garden
Will have attained
The object (of Life) :
For the life of this world
Is but goods and chattels
Of deception. ⁴⁹²

١٨٥- كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ
وَأِنَّمَا تُوقَنُ أَجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ
وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ
وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا
إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ○

186. Ye shall certainly
Be tried and tested
In your possessions
And in your personal selves ; ⁴⁹³
And ye shall certainly
Hear much that will grieve you,
From those who received
The Book before you
And from those who
Worship many gods.
But if ye persevere
Patiently, and guard
Against evil,—then
That will be
A determining factor
In all affairs.

١٨٦- لَنُبَلِّغَنَّكُمْ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ
وَلَنَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ
أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا
وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا
وَتَتَّقُوا
فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ○

187. And remember
God took a Covenant
From the People of the Book, ⁴⁹⁴
To make it known
And clear to mankind,
And not to hide it ;

١٨٧- وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ

491. The soul will not die ; but the death of the body will give a taste of death to the soul when the soul separates from the body. The soul will then know that this life was but a probation. And seeming inequalities will be adjusted finally on the Day of Judgment.

492. Cf. Longfellow's *Psalm of Life* : " All this world's a fleeting show, For man's illusion given. The only Reality will be when we have attained our final goal."

493. Not wealth and possessions only (or want of them), are the means of our trial. All our personal talents, knowledge, opportunities and their opposites,—in fact everything that happens to us and makes up our personality is a means of our testing. So is our Faith : we shall have to put up for it many insults from those who do not share it.

494. Truth—God's Message—comes to any man or nation as a matter of sacred trust. It should be broadcast and published and taught and made clear to all within reach. Privileged priesthood at once erects a barrier. But worse,—when such priesthood tampers with the truth, taking what suits it and ignoring the rest, it has sold God's gift for a miserable ephemeral profit ; how miserable, it will learn when Nemesis comes.

But they threw it away
Behind their backs, ⁴⁹⁵
And purchased with it
Some miserable gain !
And vile was the bargain
They made !

188. Think not that those
Who exult in what they
Have brought about, and love
To be praised for what
They have not done,—⁴⁹⁶
Think not that they
Can escape the Penalty.
For them is a Penalty
Grievous indeed.

189. To God belongeth
The dominion
Of the heavens
And the earth ;
And God hath power
Over all things.

SECTION 20.

190. Behold ! In the creation
Of the heavens and the earth,
And the alternation
Of Night and Day,—⁴⁹⁷
There are indeed Signs
For men of understanding,—

191. Men who celebrate
The praises of God,
Standing, sitting,
And lying down on their sides, ⁴⁹⁸
And contemplate
The (wonders of) creation

فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ
وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
فَيَسَّرَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ ○

١٨٨- لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا آتَوْا
وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يُحْمَدُوا
بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا أَفَلَا تَحْسَبُهُمْ
بِمَقَارِئِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ○

١٨٩- وَلِلَّهِ
مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

١٩٠- إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَاجْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ
لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ○

١٩١- الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا
وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ
وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ

495. Cf. ii. 101.

496. A searching picture of the worldly wise ! They may cause mischief and misery to others, but gloat over any glory it may bring them ! They may trample down God's truth, and enthrone false standards of worship. They may take credit for virtues they do not possess and seeming success that come in spite of their despicable deceptions.

497. See ii. 164. The two items mentioned here are just brief symbols recalling the six or seven mentioned in the other passage. And those too are but brief symbols and reminders of the glorious majesty of God and His goodness to man.

498. That is, in all postures, which again is symbolical of all circumstances, personal, social economic, historical and other.

In the heavens and the earth,
(With the thought) :
" Our Lord ! not for naught
Hast Thou created (all) this !
Glory to Thee ! Give us ⁴⁹⁹
Salvation from the Penalty
Of the Fire.

192. " Our Lord ! any whom Thou
Dost admit to the Fire,
Truly Thou coverest with shame,
And never will wrong-doers
Find any helpers !

193. " Our Lord ! we have heard
The call of one calling
(Us) to Faith, ' Believe ye
In the Lord, ' and we
Have believed. Our Lord !
Forgive us our sins,
Blot out from us
Our iniquities, and take
To Thyself our souls
In the company of the righteous.

194. " Our Lord ! Grant us
What Thou didst promise
Unto us through Thine Apostles,
And save us from shame
On the Day of Judgment :
For Thou never breakest
Thy promise. "

195. And their Lord hath accepted
Of them, and answered them :
" Never will I suffer to be lost
The work of any of you,

السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا
سُبْحَانَكَ
فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ○

١٩٢- رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَنْ تَدْخُلُ النَّارَ
فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُ
وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ○

١٩٣- رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا
مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ
أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا
رَبَّنَا فَاعْفُ رُكُنَا ذُنُوبَنَا
وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا
وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ ○

١٩٤- رَبَّنَا وَإِنَّا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا
عَلَى رُسُلِكَ
وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
إِنَّكَ لَا تَخْلِفُ الْوَعْدَ ○

١٩٥- فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ
عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ

499. It is the thought of Salvation that connects all these glories with man. Otherwise man would be a miserable, contemptible creature in these beauties and wonders of Nature. With his high destiny of Salvation he can be lifted even higher than these glories ! The Fire is a symbol of penalty. We pray for salvation from the penalty.

Be he male or female :

Ye are members, one of

another :⁵⁰⁰

Those who have left their homes,

Or been driven out therefrom,

Or suffered harm in My Cause,

Or fought or been slain,—

Verily, I will blot out

From them their iniquities,

And admit them into Gardens

With rivers flowing beneath ;—

A reward from the Presence⁵⁰¹

Of God, and from His Presence

Is the best of rewards."

196. ~~Let~~ not the strutting about
Of the Unbelievers
Through the land
Deceive thee :

197. Little is it for enjoyment :
Their ultimate abode
Is Hell : what an evil bed
(To lie on) !

198. On the other hand, for those
Who fear their Lord,
Are Gardens, with rivers
Flowing beneath ; therein
Are they to dwell (for ever),—
A gift from the Presence
Of God ; and that which is
In the Presence of God
Is the best (bliss)
For the righteous.

199. And there are, certainly,
Among the People of the Book,

مِنْكُمْ مَنْ ذَكَرَ أَوْ أَنْشَىٰ
بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَأَلَدَيْنَ هَاجِرُوا
وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ
وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي
وَقَتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا
لَا كُفْرَنَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَا دُخِلَتْهُمْ
جَنَّتِ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
ثَوَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ○

١٩٦- لَا يَغُرُّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا فِي الْأَلَادِ ○

١٩٧- مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَا لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ
وَيَبْسُ إِلَهُكَ ○

١٩٨- لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ
لَهُمْ جَنَّتِ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
ثَوَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ ○

الْقَائِمِ

١٩٩- وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ

500. In Islam the equal status of the sexes is not only recognised but insisted on. If sex distinction, which is a distinction in nature, does not count in spiritual matters, still less of course would count artificial distinctions, such as rank, wealth, position, race, colour, birth, etc.

501. Here, and in iii 198 below, and in many places elsewhere, stress is laid on the fact that whatever gift, or reward, or bliss will come to the righteous, its chief merit will be that it proceeds from the Presence of God Himself. "Nearness to God" expresses it better than any other symbol.

Those who believe in God,
In the revelation to you,
And in the revelation to them,
Bowing in humility to God :
They will not sell
The Signs of God
For a miserable gain !
For them is a reward
With their Lord,
And God is swift in account.

200. O ye who believe !
Persevere in patience ⁵⁰²
And constancy : vie
In such perseverance ;
Strengthen each other ;
And fear God ;
That ye may prosper. ⁵⁰³

لَكِنَّ يُوْصِيْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَا اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ
وَمَا اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِمْ
خُشْعِيْنَ لِلّٰهِ لَا يَشْتُرُوْنَ بِآيَاتِ اللّٰهِ
شَيْئًا قَلِيْلًا ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ
اَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
ۙ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ۝

۲۰۰- يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا صَبِرُوْا
وَصٰبِرُوْا
وَرٰبِطُوْا
وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ۝



502. The full meaning of *Ṣabr* is to be understood here, viz. : Patience, perseverance, constancy, self-restraint, refusing to be cowed down. These virtues we are to exercise for ourselves and in relation to others ; we are to set an example, so that others may vie with us, and we are to vie with them, lest we fall short ; in this way we strengthen each other and bind our mutual relations closer, in our common service to God.

503. Prosperity (*faḥāḥ*) here and in other passages is to be understood in a wide sense, including prosperity in our mundane affairs as well as in spiritual progress. In both cases it implies happiness and the attainment of our wishes, purified by the love of God.

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA IV (*Nisāa*)

This Sūra is closely connected chronologically with Sūra III. Its subject-matter deals with the social problems which the Muslim community had to face immediately after Uḥud. While the particular occasion made the necessity urgent, the principles laid down have permanently governed Muslim Law and social practice.

Broadly speaking, the Sūra consists of two parts : (1) that dealing with women, orphans, inheritance, marriage, and family rights generally, and (2) that dealing with the recalcitrants in the larger family, the community at Medina, *viz.*, the Hypocrites and their accomplices.

Summary.—It begins with an appeal to the solidarity of mankind, the rights of women and orphans, and the implications of family relationship, including an equitable distribution of property after death. (iv. 1-14 and C. 61.)

While the decencies of family life should be enforced, women should be held in honour and their rights recognized, in marriage, property, and inheritance ; and this principle of goodness should be extended to all beings, great and small. (iv. 15-42, and C. 62.)

The sections in Medina, not yet in the Muslim community, should not go after false gods, but should accept the authority of the Apostle, and obey him. Then it will be their privilege to be admitted to a great and glorious Fellowship. (iv. 43-70, and C. 63.)

The Believers should organize in self-defence against their enemies, and beware of the secret plots and mischiefs of the Hypocrites ; how deserters should be treated. (iv. 71-91, and C. 64.)

Caution about the taking of life ; recommendations for leaving places inimical to Islam ; religious duties in the midst of war. (iv. 92-104, and C. 65.)

Treachery and the lure of evil. (iv. 105-126, and C. 66.)

Women and orphans to be justly dealt with ; Faith must go with justice, sincerity, and moderation in speech. (iv. 127-152, and C. 67.)

Where People of the Book went wrong, with honourable exceptions (iv. 153-176, and C. 68.)

C. 61.—All mankind are one, and mutual rights
(iv. 1-14) Must be respected : the sexes

Must honour, each the other ;
Sacred are family relationships
That rise through marriage
And women bearing children ;
Orphans need especial loving care ;
In trust is held all property ;
With duties well-defined ;
And after death, due distribution
Should be made in equitable shares
To all whose affection, duty,
And trust shed light and joy
On this our life below.

Sūra IV.

Nisāa, or The Women.

In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

1. ﴿١﴾ mankind ! reverence
Your Guardian-Lord,
Who created you
From a single Person, ⁵⁰⁴
Created, of like nature,
His mate, and from them twain
Scattered (like seeds)
Countless men and women ;—
Reverence God, through Whom ⁵⁰⁵
Ye demand your mutual (rights),
And (reverence) the wombs ⁵⁰⁶
(That bore you) : for God
Ever watches over you.

2. ﴿٢﴾ No orphans restore their
property
(When they reach their age),
Nor substitute (your) worthless
things
For (their) good ones ; and devour
not
Their substance (by mixing it up) ⁵⁰⁷



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

١- يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ
الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ
وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا
رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ
وَالْأَرْحَامَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

٢- وَآتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ
وَلَا تَبَدِّلُوا الْخَبِيثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ
وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ

504. *Nafs* may mean : (1) soul ; (2) self ; (3) person, living person ; (4) will, good pleasure, as in iv. 4 below. *Minhā* : I follow the construction suggested by Imām Rāzi. The particle *min* would then suggest here not a portion or a source of something else, but a species, a nature, a similarity. The pronoun *hā* refers of course to *Nafs*. The Biblical story of the creation of Eve from a rib of Adam may be allegorical, but we need not assume it in Quranic teaching.

505. All our mutual rights and duties are referred to God. We are His creatures ; His Will is the standard and measure of Good ; and our duties are measured by our conformity with His Will. "Our wills are ours, to make them Thine," says Tennyson (*In Memoriam*). Among ourselves (human beings) our mutual rights and duties arise out of God's Law, the sense of Right that is implanted in us by Him.

506. Among the most wonderful mysteries of our nature is that of sex. The unregenerate male is apt, in the pride of his physical strength, to forget the all-important part which the female plays in his very existence, and in all the social relationships that arise in our collective human lives. The mother that bore us must ever have our reverence. The wife, through whom we enter parentage, must have our reverence. Sex, which governs so much of our physical life, and has so much influence on our emotional and higher nature, deserves—not our fear, or our contempt, or our amused indulgence, but—our reverence in the highest sense of the term. With this fitting introduction we enter on a discussion of women, orphans, and family relationships.

507. Justice to orphans is enjoined, and three things are particularly mentioned as temptations in the way of a guardian : (1) He must not postpone restoring all his ward's property when the time comes ; subject to iv. 5 below. (2) If there is a list of property, it is not enough that that list should be technically followed : the property restored must be of equal value to the property received ; the same principle applies where there is no list. (3) If property is managed together, or where perishable goods must necessarily be consumed, the strictest probity is necessary when the separation takes place, and this is insisted on. See also ii, 220 and note.

With your own. For this is
Indeed a great sin.

3. If ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly
With the orphans,⁵⁰⁸
Marry women of your choice,
Two, or three, or four;
But if ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly (with them),
Then only one, or (a captive)
That your right hands possess.
That will be more suitable,
To prevent you
From doing injustice.⁵⁰⁹

4. And give the women
(On marriage) their dower
As a free gift; but if they,
Of their own good pleasure,
Remit any part of it to you,
Take it and enjoy it
With right good cheer.

5. To those weak of
understanding⁵¹⁰
Make not over your property,⁵¹¹
Which God hath made
A means of support for you,
But feed and clothe them
Therewith, and speak to them
Words of kindness and justice.

إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَثِيرًا ۝

۳- وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ
فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ
مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبْعَ
فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً
أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ
ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا ۝

۴- وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً
فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ
مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا
فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا ۝

۵- وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ
أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَمًا
وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ
وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ۝

508. Notice the conditional clause about orphans, introducing the rules about marriage. This reminds us of the immediate occasion of the promulgation of this verse. It was after Uhud, when the Muslim community was left with many orphans and widows, and some captives of war. Their treatment was to be governed by principles of the greatest humanity and equity. The occasion is past, but the principles remain. Marry the orphans if you are quite sure that you will in that way protect their interests and their property, with perfect justice to them and to your own dependants if you have any. If not, make other arrangements for the orphans.

509. The unrestricted number of wives of the "Times of Ignorance" was now strictly limited to a maximum of four, provided you could treat them with perfect equality, in material things as well as in affection and immaterial things. As this condition is most difficult to fulfil, I understand the recommendation to be towards monogamy.

510. This applies to orphans, but the wording is perfectly general, and defines principles like those of Chancery in English Law and the Court of Wards in Indian Law. Property has not only its rights but also its responsibilities. The owner may not do just what he likes absolutely; his right is limited by the good of the community of which he is a member, and if he is incapable of understanding it, his control should be removed. This does not mean that he is harshly dealt with. On the contrary his interests must be protected, and he must be treated with special kindness because of his incapacity.

511. Your property: Ultimately all property belongs to the Community, and is intended for the support of you, i.e., the community. It is held in trust by a particular individual. If he is incapable, he is put aside but gently and with kindness. While his incapacity remains, the duties and responsibilities devolve on his guardian even more strictly than in the case of the original owner; for he may not take any of the profits for himself unless he is poor, and in that case his remuneration for his trouble must be on a scale that is no more than just and reasonable.

6. **Take** trial of orphans
Until they reach the age ⁵¹²
Of marriage; if then ye find
Sound judgment in them,
Release their property to them;
But consume it not wastefully,
Nor in haste against their growing up.

If the guardian is well-off,
Let him claim no remuneration,
But if he is poor, let him
Have for himself what is
Just and reasonable.
When ye release their property
To them, take witnesses
In their presence:
But all-sufficient
Is God in taking account. ⁵¹³

7. **From** what is left by parents
And those nearest related ⁵¹⁴
There is a share for men
And a share for women,
Whether the property be small
Or large,—a determinate share.

8. But if at the time of division
Other relatives, or orphans,
Or poor, are present,
Feed them out of the (property),
And speak to them
Words of kindness and justice.

9. Let those (disposing of an estate)
Have the same fear in their minds
As they would have for their own
If they had left a helpless family
behind:
Let them fear God, and speak
Words of appropriate (comfort). ⁵¹⁵

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ
فَإِنْ اُنْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا
فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ
وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ يَكْبَرُوا
وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعِِفْ
وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ
فَاشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ
وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ○

وَاللَّذِينَ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ
وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا تَرَكَ
الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ
مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا ○
وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَ
الْيَتَامَىٰ وَالسَّكِينُ فَارْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ
وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ○

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ
ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعْفًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ
فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ○

512. The age of marriage is the age when they reach their majority.

513. It is good to take human witnesses when you faithfully discharge your trust; but remember that, however fully you satisfy your fellow-men when you give your account to them, there is a stricter account due from you to God. If you are righteous in God's eyes, you must follow these stricter standards.

514. I have resisted the temptation to translate "next of kin," as this phrase has a technical meaning in Indian law, referring to certain kinds of heirs, whereas here the people meant are those whose inheritance is to be divided. The shares are specified. Here the general principles are laid down that females inherit as well as males, and that relatives who have no legal shares, orphans, and indigent people are not to be treated harshly, if present at the division. Their "feed" may be charged to the property as part of the funeral expenses.

515. It is a touching argument addressed to those who have to divide an estate. 'How anxious would you be if you had left a helpless family behind? If others do so, help and be kind.

10. Those who unjustly
Eat up the property
Of orphans, eat up
A Fire into their own
Bodies : they will soon
Be enduring a blazing Fire !

SECTION 2.

11. God (thus) directs you
As regards your children's ⁵¹⁶
(Inheritance) : to the male,
A portion equal to that
Of two females : if only
Daughters, two or more, ⁵¹⁷
Their share is two-thirds
Of the inheritance ;
If only one, her share
Is a half.

For parents, a sixth share
Of the inheritance to each,
If the deceased left children ;
If no children, and the parents
Are the (only) heirs, the mother
Has a third ; if the deceased
Left brothers (or sisters),
The mother has a sixth.
(The distribution in all cases
Is) after the payment
Of legacies and debts.
Ye know not whether
Your parents or your children
Are nearest to you
In benefit. These are
Settled portions ordained ⁵¹⁸

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَى ظُلْمًا
إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا
وَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا ۝

إِذَا يُوَصِّيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ
لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ لَلْأُنثَىٰ
فَإِنْ كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ
فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً
فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ وَلَا بُوَيْهَ
لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا الشُّدُسُ
مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِنْ كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ
وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُ آبَاؤُهُ فَلِلْأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ
وَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ
فِلِلْأُمِّهِ الشُّدُسُ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ
يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ
أَبَاءُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ
أَيُّكُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا فَرِيضَةٌ

516 The principles of inheritance law are laid down in broad outline in the Qur-ān ; the precise details have been worked out on the basis of the Apostle's practice and that of his Companions, and by interpretation and analogy. Muslim jurists have collected a vast amount of learning on this subject, and this body of law is enough by itself to form the subject of life-long study. Here we shall deal only with the broad principles to be gathered from the Text, as interpreted by the Jurists.

(1) The power of testamentary disposition extends over only one-third of the Property ; the remaining two-thirds are distributed among heirs as laid down. (2) All distribution takes place after the legacies and debts (including funeral expenses) have first been paid. (3) Legacies cannot be left to any of the heirs included in the scheme of distribution ; or it will amount to upsetting the shares and undue preference of one heir to another. (4) Generally, but not always, the male takes a share double that of a female in his own category.

517. At first sight, the Arabic words seem to mean : "if more than two daughters." But the alternative in the next clause is : "if only one daughter." Logically, therefore, the first clause must mean : "if daughters, two or more." This is the general interpretation, and is confirmed by the supplementary provision in iv. 176 at the end of the Sūra, which should be read along with this.

518. This verse deals with the portions allotted to (a) children, and (b) parents. The next verse deals with the portions allotted to (c) husband or wife of the deceased, and (d) collaterals. The children's shares are fixed, but their amount will depend upon what goes to the parents. If both parents are living, and there are also children, both father and mother take a sixth each ; if only one parent is living, he or she takes his or her sixth ; and the rest goes to the children. If the parents are living, and there is no child or other heir, the mother gets a third (and the father the remaining two-thirds) ; if there are no children, but there are brothers or sisters (this is interpreted strictly in the plural), the mother has a sixth, and the father apparently the residue, as the father excludes collaterals. This is far from being an exhaustive statement, but it establishes the proposition that children and parents have always some share if they survive, but their shares are affected by the existence and number of the heirs in these categories.

By God ; and God is
All-knowing, All-wise.

12. **¶**En what your wives leave,
Your share is a half,
If they leave no child ;
But if they leave a child,
Ye get a fourth ; after payment
Of legacies and debts.
In what ye leave,
Their share is a fourth,⁵¹⁹
If ye leave no child ;
But if ye leave a child,
They get an eighth ; after payment
Of legacies and debts.

¶f the man or woman
Whose inheritance is in question,
Has left neither ascendants nor
descendants,⁵²⁰
But has left a brother⁵²¹
Or a sister, each one of the two
Gets a sixth ; but if more
Than two, they share in a third ;
After payment of legacies
And debts ; so that no loss⁵²²
Is caused (to any one).
Thus is it ordained by God ;
And God is All knowing,
Most Forbearing.

مِنْ اللَّهِ إِنْ اللَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

۱۲- وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ
إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ
وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِينَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ
وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ
وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ
الثُّلُثُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ
تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ
يُورِثُ كَلَّةً أَوْ امْرَأَةً وَكَانَ
أَوْ أُخْتُ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا الشُّدُسُ
إِنْ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي
الثُّلُثِ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَى بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ
غَيْرِ مُضَارٍّ وَصِيَّةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ

519. The husband takes a half of his deceased wife's property if she leaves no child, the rest going to residuaries ; if she leaves a child, the husband gets only a fourth. Following the rule that the female share is generally half the male share, the widow gets a fourth of her deceased husband's property, if he leaves no children, and an eighth if he leaves children. If there are more widows than one, their collective share is a fourth or an eighth as the case may be ; *inter se* they divide equally.

520. The word in Arabic is *kalālat*, which is so construed usually. But it was nowhere defined authoritatively in the lifetime of the Apostle. This was one of the three terms about which *Ḥaḍhrat* Umar wished that the Apostle had defined them in his lifetime, the other two being *Khilāfat*, and *ribā* (usury). On the accepted definition, we are concerned with the inheritance of a person who has left no descendant or ascendant (however distant), but only collaterals, with or without a widow or widower. If there is a widow or widower surviving, she or he takes the share as already defined, before the collaterals come in.

521. A "brother or sister" is here interpreted to mean a uterine brother or sister, *i.e.*, a brother or sister by the same mother but not by the same father, as the case of full brothers and sisters or brothers and sisters by the same father but different mothers is understood to be dealt with later, in the last verse of this Sūra. The uterine brother or sister, if only one survives, takes a sixth ; if more than one survive, they take a third collectively, and divide among themselves ; this on the supposition that there are no descendants or ascendants, however remote. There may, however, be a widow or widower surviving ; she or he takes her or his share, as already specified.

The shares of collaterals generally are calculated on a complicated system which cannot be described in a brief note. For these, and the rules about Residuaries (*ʿAṣaba*) reference should be made to special legal treatises.

522. Debts (in which funeral expenses take first rank) and legacies are the first charge on the estate of a deceased person, before distribution takes place. But equity and fair dealing should be observed in all matters, so that no one's interests are prejudiced. Thus funeral expenses should be reasonable ; debts must be genuine and not reckless debts ; and the shares must be calculated with fairness.

13. ~~Those~~ Those are limits
Set by God : those who
Obey God and His Apostle
Will be admitted to Gardens
With rivers flowing beneath,
To abide therein (for ever)
And that will be
The Supreme achievement.^{522-A}

١٣- تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

14. But those who disobey
God and His Apostle
And transgress His limits
Will be admitted
To a Fire, to abide therein :
And they shall have
A humiliating punishment.

١٤- وَمَنْ يُعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا
خَالِدًا فِيهَا
وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ۝

C. 62.—What can be a holier cement to Society
(iv. 15-42.) Than that women should be chaste and pure,
And crimes against sex rooted out ?
Let decency, kindness, and justice
Prevail in all sex relationships ;
Let marriage be cherished and carefully guarded ;
Women's rights secured ; family jars
Adjusted ; and all life lived
In faith, charity, and kindness sincere
To all our fellow-creatures.

SECTION 3.

15. If any of your women
Are guilty of lewdness,⁵²³
Take the evidence of four⁵²⁴
(Reliable) witnesses from amongst
you
Against them ; and if they testify,
Confine them to houses until
Death do claim them,

١٥- وَالَّذِي يَأْتِيَنَّ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ
فَأَسْتَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِنْكُمْ
فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ
حَتَّى يَتَوَفَّيَهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ

522-A. Cf. xliv. 57, n. 4733 ; also App. XII, 15, p. 1469.

523. Most commentators understand this to refer to adultery or fornication ; in that case they consider that the punishment was altered to 100 stripes by the later verse, xxiv. 2. But I think it refers to unnatural crime between women, analogous to unnatural crime between men in v. 16 below : because (1) no punishment is specified here for the man, as would be the case where a man was involved in the crime ; (2) the word *al-lât*, the purely feminine plural of *al-lat*, is used for the parties to the crime ; (3) the punishment is indefinite ; see the next note but one.

524. To protect the honour of women, stricter evidence is required, i.e., the evidence of four instead of the usual two witnesses. It is the same for adultery (see xxiv. 4).

Or God ordain for them
Some (other) way.⁵²⁵

16. If two men among you
Are guilty of lewdness,
Punish them both.
If they repent and amend,
Leave them alone ; for God
Is Oft-returning, Most Merciful.

17. God accepts the repentance
Of those who do evil
In ignorance and repent
Soon afterwards ; to them
Will God turn in mercy ;
For God is full of knowledge
And wisdom.

18. Of no effect is the repentance
Of those who continue ⁵²⁶
To do evil, until Death
Faces one of them, and he says,
" Now have I repented indeed ; "
Nor of those who die
Rejecting Faith : for them
{ Have We prepared
A punishment most grievous.

19. ﴿٥٢٧﴾ ye who believe !
Ye are forbidden to inherit
Women against their will.⁵²⁷
Nor should ye treat them

أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا ۝

١٦- وَالَّذِينَ يَأْتِيهِمَا مِنْكُمْ فَادُّوهُمَا
فَإِنْ تَابَا وَأُصْلَحَا
فَاعْرِضْ عَنْهُمَا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ۝

١٧- إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ
لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الشُّوْءَ بِغَهَالَةٍ
ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ
فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

١٨- وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ
قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْفَن
وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ
أُولَئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۝

١٩- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا
وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ

525. Keep them in prison until some definite order is received. Those who take the crime to be adultery or fornication construe this definite order ("some other way") to mean some definite pronouncement by the Prophet under inspiration ; this was the punishment of flogging under xxiv. 2. If we understand the crime to be unnatural crime, we might presume, in the absence of any definite order ("some other way") that the punishment would be similar to that for men in the next verse. That is itself indefinite, and perhaps intentionally so, as the crime is most shameful, and should be unknown in a well-regulated society. The maximum punishment would of course be imprisonment for life.

526. Note the fine touch. A sin may be fashionable, and people may sin together without compunction. When one of them is faced with Death, he repents, but that sort of repentance is no good.

527. Among many nations, including Arabs in the Days of Ignorance, a step-son or brother took possession of a dead man's widow or widows along with his goods and chattels. This shameful custom is forbidden. See also iv. 22 below.

With harshness, that ye may
Take away part of the dower⁵²⁸
Ye have given them,—except
Where they have been guilty
Of open lewdness ;
On the contrary live with them
On a footing of kindness and
equity.

If ye take a dislike to them
It may be that ye dislike
A thing, and God brings about
Through it a great deal of good.

20. But if ye decide to take
One wife in place of another,
Even if ye had given the latter
A whole treasure⁵²⁹ for dower,
Take not the least bit of it back :
Would ye take it by slander
And a manifest wrong ?

21. And how could ye take it
When ye have gone in
Unto each other, and they have
Taken from you a solemn
covenant ?

22. And marry not women
Whom your fathers married,—
Except what is past :
It was shameful and odious,—
An abominable custom indeed.⁵³⁰

لَتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ
مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيَّنَةٍ
وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْعُرُوفِ
فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ
فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا
وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۝

۲۰- وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَكَانَ
زَوْجٍ ۚ وَآتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنْطَارًا
فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا
أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بِهْتَانٍ وَإِثْمٍ مُبِينٍ ۝

۲۱- وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ
وَقَدْ أَقْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ
وَأَخَذْتُمْ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا ۝

۲۲- وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ
النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ
إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ۝

528. Another trick to detract from the freedom of married women was to treat them badly and force them to sue for a *Khul'a* divorce (see ii, 229, n. 258) or its equivalent in pre-Islamic custom, when the dower could be claimed back. This is also forbidden. Or the harshness may be exercised in another way : a divorced woman may be prevented by those who have control of her, from re-marrying unless she remits her dower. All kinds of harshness are forbidden.

529. Treasure : *Qinṭār*—a Talent of gold : see iii, 14, first note.

530. See above : iv. 19, n. 527.

SECTION 4.

23. Prohibited to you

(For marriage) are :—⁵³¹Your mothers, daughters,⁵³²

Sisters ; father's sisters,

Mother's sisters ; brother's

daughters,

Sister's daughters ; foster-mothers⁵³³

(Who gave you suck), foster-sisters ;

Your wives' mothers ;

Your step-daughters under your⁵³⁴

Guardianship, born of your wives

To whom ye have gone in,—

No prohibition if ye have not gone
in ;—

(Those who have been)

Wives of your sons⁵³⁵ proceeding

From your loins ;

And two sisters in wedlock

At one and the same time,⁵³⁶

Except for what is past ;

For God is Oft-forgiving,

⁴
30 Most Merciful ;—

۲۳- حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبنَاتُكُمْ
وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبنَدُ
الْأَخِ وَبنَدُ الْأُخْتِ
وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ
وَأَخَوَاتُكُم مِّن الرِّضَاعَةِ
وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَّائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي
فِي حُجُورِكُم مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي
دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا
دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَخَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ
وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ
إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا

531. This Table of Prohibited Degrees agrees in the main with what is usually accepted among all nations, except in minor details. It begins in the last verse (with father's widows or divorcees). The scheme is drawn up on the assumption that the person who proposes to marry is a man: if it is a woman, the same scheme will apply, *mutatis mutandis*: it will read: "your fathers, sons, brothers," etc.; or you can always read it from the husband's view of relationship, as there must always be a husband in a marriage.

532. "Mother" includes grandmother (through the father or mother), great grandmother, etc., "daughter" includes grand-daughter (through son or daughter), great grand-daughter, etc.; "sisters" includes full-sister and half-sister. "Father's sister" includes grandfather's sister, etc., and "mother's sister" includes grandmother's sister, etc.

533. "Fosterage" or milk-relationships play an important part in Muslim Law, and count like blood-relationships: it would therefore seem that not only foster-mothers and foster-sisters, but foster-mother's sister, etc., all come within the prohibited degrees.

534. It is generally (but not unanimously) held that "under your guardianship" is a description, not a condition. Therefore a step-daughter not "under your guardianship" is still within the prohibition if the other condition (about her mother) is fulfilled.

535. "Sons" includes grandsons, but excludes adopted sons, or persons treated as such, on account of the words "proceeding from your loins."

536. The bar against two sisters in marriage together applies to aunt and niece together, but not to deceased wife's sister after the wife dies.

24. Also (prohibited are)

Women already married,
Except those

Whom your right hands possess : ⁵³⁷

Thus hath God ordained

(Prohibitions) against you :

Except for these, all others

Are lawful, provided

Ye seek (them in marriage)

With gifts from your property,—

Desiring chastity, not lust. ⁵³⁸

Seeing that ye derive

Benefit from them, give them

Their dowers (at least). ⁵³⁹

As prescribed ; but if,

After a dower is prescribed, ye
agree

Mutually (to vary it),

There is no blame on you,

And God is All-knowing,

All-wise.

25. If any of you have not

The means wherewith

To wed free believing women,

They may wed believing

Girls from among those

Whom your right hands possess : ⁵⁴⁰

And God hath full knowledge

About your Faith.

Ye are one from another :

Wed them with the leave

Of their owners, and give them

Their dowers, according to what

٢٤- وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ

إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ

وَأَجَلَ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ

أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ

مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسِفِحِينَ

فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ

فَأْتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ

فِيمَا تَرْضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

٢٥- وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ

طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

مِنْ قَتَيْتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَيْمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ

فَأَنْكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ

وَأْتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

537. Whom your right hands possess : i.e., captives in a Jihād, or war under the orders of the righteous Imām against those who persecute Faith. In such cases formal hostility dissolves civil ties.

538. After defining the prohibited degrees, the verse proceeds to say that women other than those specified may be sought in marriage, but even so, not from motives of lust, but in order to promote chastity between the sexes. Marriage in the original Arabic is here described by a word which suggests a fortress (ḥiṣn) : marriage is, therefore, the fortress of chastity.

539. As the woman in marriage surrenders her person, so the man also must surrender (besides some part of his independence) at least some of his property according to his means. And this gives rise to the law of Dower. A minimum dower is prescribed, but it is not necessary to stick to the minimum, and in the new relationship created, the parties are recommended to act towards each other with the greatest confidence and liberty.

540. That is, captives taken in a Jihād : see note 537 above. "Your right hand" does not mean necessarily that she has been assigned to you, or is your property. All captures in war belong to the community ; they are "yours" in that sense. If you seek such a person in marriage do it from no base motives. Safeguard your faith, and see that she too does believe. In that case, after all, she is of the human brotherhood, and her condition is accidental and redeemable. If the slave bore a child to her master, she would become free. The slave condition is now out of date, in the true spirit of Islam. But there are other conditions in which a woman's (or man's) freedom is restricted, and the principle would apply there also.

Is reasonable : they should be
Chaste, not lustful, nor taking
Paramours : when they
Are taken in wedlock,
If they fall into shame,
Their punishment is half
That for free women.
This (permission) is for those
Among you who fear sin ;
But it is better for you
That ye practise self-restraint.
And God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

SECTION 5.

26. God doth wish
To make clear to you
And to show you
The ordinances of those
Before you ; and (He
Doth wish to) turn to you
(In Mercy) : and God
Is All-knowing, All-wise.
27. God doth wish
To turn to you,
But the wish of those
Who follow their lusts
Is that ye should turn
Away (from Him),—
Far, far away.
28. God doth wish
To lighten your (difficulties) :
For man was created
Weak (in flesh).
29. O ye who believe ! ⁵⁴¹
Eat not up your property

مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرِ مُسَفِّحَاتٍ
وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَحْدَانٍ
فَإِذَا أَحْصَيْنَ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ
فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ
الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ
وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ٥٤١

٢٦- يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ
وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

٢٧- وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ
يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ
أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مِيلًا عَظِيمًا ٥

٢٨- يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ
وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا ٥

٢٩- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ

541. Let me paraphrase this verse, for there is profound meaning in it. (1) All your property you hold in trust, whether it is in your name, or belongs to the community, or to people over whom you have control. To waste is wrong. (2) In ii. 188 the same phrase occurred, to caution us against greed. Here it occurs, to encourage us to increase property by economic use (traffic and trade), recalling Christ's parable of the Talents (Matt. xxv. 14-30), where the servants who had increased their master's wealth were promoted and the servant who had hoarded was cast into darkness. (3) We are warned that our waste may mean our own destruction ("nor kill or destroy yourselves.") But there is a more general meaning also : we must be careful of our own and other people's lives. We must commit no violence. This is the opposite of "trade and traffic by mutual good-will." (4) Our violence to our own brethren is particularly preposterous, seeing that God has loved and showered His mercies on us and all His creatures.

Among yourselves in vanities :
But let there be amongst you
Traffic and trade
By mutual good-will :
Nor kill (or destroy)
Yourselves : for verily
God hath been to you
Most Merciful !

30. If any do that
In rancour and injustice,—
Soon shall We cast them
Into the Fire : and easy
It is for God.

31. If ye (but) eschew
The most heinous
Of the things
Which ye are forbidden to do,
We shall expel
Out of you
All the evil in you,
And admit you to a Gate
Of great honour.

32. And in no wise covet ⁵⁴²
Those things in which God
Hath bestowed His gifts—
More freely on some of you
Than on others : to men
Is allotted what they earn,
And to women what they earn :
But ask God of His bounty.
For God hath full knowledge
Of all things.

33. To (benefit) every one,
We have appointed
Sharers and heirs ⁵⁴³
To property left

يَنْتَكُمُ بِالْبَاطِلِ
إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ
وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا

۳۰- وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَظُلْمًا
فَسَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِ نَارًا
وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا

۳۱- إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ
مَا تُهْنُونَ عَنْهُ
نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ
وَنُدْخِلَكُمْ مُدْخَلَ كَرِيمٍ

۳۲- وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ
عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبُوا
وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ
وَسَأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

۳۳- وَ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي مِمَّا تَرَكَ
الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ

542. Men and women have gifts from God—some greater than others. They seem unequal, but we are assured that Providence has allotted them by a scheme by which people receive what they earn. If this does not appear clear in our sight, let us remember that we have no full knowledge but God has. We must not be jealous if other people have more than we have—in wealth or position or strength or honour or talent or happiness. Probably things are equalized in the aggregate or in the long run, or equated to needs and merits on a scale which we cannot appraise. If we want more, instead of being jealous or covetous, we should pray to God and place before Him our needs. Though He knows all, and has no need of our prayer, our prayer may reveal to ourselves our shortcomings and enable us to deserve more of God's bounty or make ourselves fit for it.

543. *Mawālī*, plural of *Mawlā*; from the root *walā*, to be near in place or relationship, to follow. *Mawlā* may therefore mean : (1) nearly related, (2) heir, (3) sharer or partner; these three meanings are implied here : (4) neighbour, or friend, or protector, or client (xliv. 44) : (5) lord, or master (xvi. 76).

By parents and relatives.
To those, also, to whom
Your right hand was pledged,⁵⁴⁴
Give their due portion.
For truly God is witness
To all things.

SECTION 6.

34. **Men** are the protectors⁵⁴⁵
And maintainers of women,
Because God has given
The one more (strength)
Than the other, and because
They support them
From their means.
Therefore the righteous women
Are devoutly obedient, and guard
In (the husband's) absence
What God would have them
guard.⁵⁴⁶
- As to those women
On whose part ye fear
Disloyalty and ill-conduct,
Admonish them (first),⁵⁴⁷
(Next), refuse to share their beds,
(And last) beat them (lightly);
But if they return to obedience,
Seek not against them⁵⁴⁸
Means (of annoyance) :

وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ
فَاتُّوهُمْ نَصِيبُهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا ۝

٢٣-الرجال قَوَامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ
بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ
وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ
فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ
بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ
وَالَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ
وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ
وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ
فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ
فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۝

544. When the emigration took place from Mecca to Medina, bonds and links of brotherhood were established between the Emigrants and the Helpers, and they shared in each other's inheritance. Later, when the Community was solidly established, and relations with those left behind in Mecca were resumed, the rights of blood-relations in Mecca, and the Helper-brethren in Medina were both safeguarded. This is the particular meaning. The more general meaning is similar: respect your ties of blood, of neighbourhood, and of friendly compacts and understandings. Be just to all.

545. *Qawwām*, one who stands firm in another's business, protects his interests, and looks after his affairs; or it may be, standing firm in his own business, managing affairs with a steady purpose. Cf. iv. 135.

546. Or the sentence may be rendered: "and protect (the husband's interests) in his absence, as God has protected them." If we take the rendering as in the text, the meaning is: the good wife is obedient and harmonious in her husband's presence, and in his absence guards his reputation and property and her own virtue, as ordained by God. If we take the rendering as in the note, we reach the same result in a different way: the good wife, in her husband's absence, remembering how God has given her a sheltered position, does everything to justify that position by guarding her own virtue and his reputation and property.

547. In case of family jars four steps are mentioned, to be taken in that order: (1) perhaps verbal advice or admonition may be sufficient; (2) If not, sex relations may be suspended; (3) if this is not sufficient, some slight physical correction may be administered; but Imām Shāhī considers this inadvisable, though permissible, and all authorities are unanimous in deprecating any sort of cruelty, even of the nagging kind, as mentioned in the next clause; (4) if all this fails, a family council is recommended in iv. 35 below.

548. Temper, nagging, sarcasm, speaking at each other in other people's presence, reverting to past faults which should be forgiven and forgotten,—all this is forbidden. And the reason given is characteristic of Islam. You must live all your life as in the presence of God, Who is high above us, but Who watches over us. How petty and contemptible will our little squabbles appear in His presence!

For God is Most High,
Great (above you all).

35. If ye fear a breach
Between them twain,
Appoint (two) arbiters,
One from his family,
And the other from hers ;⁵⁴⁹
If they wish for peace,
God will cause
Their reconciliation :
For God hath full knowledge,
And is acquainted
With all things.

36. Serve God, and join not ⁵⁵⁰
Any partners with Him ;
And do good—
To parents, kinsfolk,
Orphans, those in need,
Neighbours who are near, ⁵⁵¹
Neighbours who are strangers,
The Companion by your side, ⁵⁵²
The way-farer (ye meet),
And what your right hands
possess : ⁵⁵³

For God loveth not
The arrogant, the vainglorious ;—⁵⁵⁴

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا ۝

٣٥- وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا

فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهِ

وَحَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهَا ۚ

إِنْ يُرِيدُوا إِصْلَاحًا

يُوفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا ۝

٣٦- وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا

وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ

وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ

وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنُبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۚ

وَمِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۚ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا ۝

549. An excellent plan for settling family disputes, without too much publicity or mud-throwing, or resort to the chicaneries of the law. The Latin countries recognise this plan in their legal systems. It is a pity that Muslims do not resort to it universally, as they should. The arbiters from each family would know the idiosyncracies of both parties, and would be able, with God's help, to effect a real reconciliation.

550. The essence of Islam is to serve God and do good to your fellow-creatures. This is wider and more comprehensive than "Love God and love your neighbour." For it includes duties to animals as our fellow-creatures, and emphasises practical service rather than sentiment.

551. *Neighbours who are near* : that is, in local situation as well as intimate relationships, just as *neighbours who are strangers* includes those whom we do not know or who live away from us or in a different sphere altogether.

552. *The Companion by your side* may be your intimate friends and associates, just as the *way-farer you meet* may be a casual acquaintance on your travels. This last is much wider than the "stranger within your gate."

553. *What your right hands possess* : anything that has no civil rights. It includes captives or slaves (where they exist in any form whatever), people in your power, or dumb animals with whom you have to deal. They are all God's creatures and deserve our sympathy and our practical service. Cf. Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" : "He prayeth best who loveth best all things both great and small, For the dear God who loveth us, He made and loveth all."

554. Real deeds of service and kindness proceed, not from showing off or from a superior sort of condescension (Cf. "White Man's Burden"), but from a frank recognition of our own humility and the real claims, before God, of all our fellow-creatures. For in our mutual needs we are equal before God, or perhaps the best of us (as the world sees us) may be worse than the worst of us (from the same point of view).

37. (Nor) those who are niggardly
Or enjoin niggardliness on others,
Or hide the bounties
Which God hath bestowed ⁵⁵⁵
On them; for We have prepared,
For those who resist Faith,
A Punishment that 'steeps' ⁵⁵⁶
Them in contempt;—

38. Nor those who spend
Of their substance, to be seen ⁵⁵⁷
Of men, but have no faith
In God and the Last Day:
If any take the Evil One
For their intimate,
What a dreadful intimate he is!

39. And what burden
Were it on them if they
Had faith in God
And in the Last Day,
And they spent
Out of what God hath
Given them for sustenance? ⁵⁵⁸
For God hath full
Knowledge of them.

40. God is never unjust
In the least degree:
If there is any good (done),
He doubleth it,
And giveth from His own
Presence a great reward. ⁵⁵⁹

41. How then if We brought
From each People a witness,

٣٧- الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ
وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبَخْلِ
وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ۝

٣٨- وَالَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ
وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَمَنْ يَكُنِ الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ
قَرِينًا ۝

٣٩- وَمَا ذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا ۝

٤٠- إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ
وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضْعِفْهَا
وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

٤١- فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ

555. Arrogance is one reason why our deeds of love and kindness do not thrive. Another is niggardliness or selfishness. God does not love either the one or the other, for they both proceed from want of love of God, or faith in God. Niggardly is the worldly wise man who not only refuses to spend himself in service but by example and precept prevents others from doing so, as otherwise he would be made odious by comparison, before his fellow-creatures. So he either makes a virtue of his caution, or hides the gifts which have been given him—wealth, position, talent, etc.

556. Note how the punishment fits the crime. The niggard holds other people in contempt, and in doing so, becomes himself contemptible.

557. A fault opposed to niggardliness, and equally opposed to true Charity, is to spend lavishly to be seen of men. It is mere hypocrisy; there is no love in it, either for God or for man.

558. *Sustenance*: physical, intellectual, spiritual—everything pertaining to life and growth. Our being is from God, and we must therefore spend ourselves freely for God. How can it be a burden? It is merely a response to the demand of our own healthy nature.

559. Any little good of our own comes from the purity of our heart. Its results in the world are doubled and multiplied by God's grace and mercy; but an even greater reward comes from His own Presence, His good pleasure, which brings us nearer to Him.

And We brought thee
As a witness against
These People ! ⁵⁶⁰

42. On that day
Those who reject Faith
And disobey the Apostle
Will wish that the earth
Were made one with them : ⁵⁶¹
But never will they hide
A single fact from God !

وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا ۝
يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَعَصَوْا الرَّسُولَ
لَوْ شِئِيَ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ
وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا ۝

وقف النبي عليه السلام

C. 63.—Be clean and pure, and seek not occasions
(iv. 43-70.) For quibbles, nor go after sorcery
Or false gods. Be faithful
In your trusts, learn obedience,
And settle your quarrels under the guidance
Of God's Apostle. Ever keep away
From hypocrisy and every kind of falsehood.
Then will you be admitted to a glorious Fellowship
With the highest and noblest in the spiritual world.

SECTION 7.

43. ④ ye who believe !
Approach not prayers
With a mind befogged, ⁵⁶²
Until ye can understand
All that ye say,—
Nor in a state
Of ceremonial impurity
(Except when travelling on the
road),
Until after washing
Your whole body
If ye are ill,
Or on a journey,
Or one of you cometh
From offices of nature,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرُبُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى
حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ
وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ
حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى
أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ
أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ

560. Each Prophet and Leader is a witness for his People and his contemporaries—for those who accept God, and against those who reject Him.

561. Those who reject God's message will wish, when their eyes are opened, that they were reduced to dust, for existence itself will be agony to them. They might like to hide in the dust, but nothing is hidden from God. All their past will stand out clear before Him.

562. The reference is either to a state of intoxication or to a dazed state of mind on account of drowsiness or some other cause. Or perhaps both are implied. Before the prohibition of intoxicants altogether was promulgated, it was at least unbecoming that people should come to prayers in such a state. For prayers it is only right that we should collect our whole minds and approach God in a spirit of reverence. "Prayers" (*Ṣalāt*) here may mean "a place of prayers," a Mosque: the resulting meaning would be the same.

Nay—but God
Doth sanctify
Whom He pleaseth.
But never will they
Fail to receive justice
In the least little thing.⁵⁷¹

50. Behold! how they invent
A lie against God!
But that by itself
Is a manifest sin!

SECTION 8.

51. Hast thou not turned
Thy vision to those
Who were given a portion⁵⁷²
Of the Book? They believe
In Sorcery and Evil,⁵⁷³
And say to the Unbelievers
That they are better guided
In the (right) way
Than the Believers!
52. They are (men) whom
God hath cursed:
And those whom God
Hath cursed, thou wilt find,
Have no one to help.⁵⁷⁴
53. Have they a share
In dominion or power?
Behold, they give not a farthing⁵⁷⁵
To their fellow-men?

بَلِ اللّٰهُ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ
وَلَا يَظُنُّونَ فَتِيلًا ۝

٥٠- اَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ
وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ اِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ۝

٥١- اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا نَصِيْبًا مِّنَ
الْكِتٰبِ
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْحَدِيْثِ وَالطَّاعُوْتِ
وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ لِلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا هٰؤُلَاءِ
اَهْدٰى مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا سَبِيْلًا ۝
٥٢- اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ
وَمَنْ يَلْعَنُ اللّٰهُ
فَلَنْ يَجِدَ لَهُ نَصِيْرًا ۝
٥٣- اَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيْبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ
فَاِذَا لَا يُؤْتُوْنَ النَّاسَ نَقِيْرًا ۝

571. Literally, the small skin in the groove of a date stone, a thing of no value: *qaṭīl*.

572. Cf. iii. 23 and n. 366. The phrase also occurs in iv. 44.

573. The word I have translated *Sorcery* is *jibt*, which may mean divination, sorcery, magic, or any false object of belief or worship, such as an idol. The word I have translated *Evil* (here and in ii 256) is *Tāġūt*, which means the evil one, the one who exceeds all bounds, Satan; or it may refer to some idol worshipped by the Pagan Arabs, with whom the Jews of Medina were intriguing against the Holy Apostle. The Jews had taken much to sorcery, magic, divination, and such superstitions.

574. The Jews were then seeking the aid of the Meccan Pagans against Muhammad, but so far from getting any help from them, they and the Pagans were both overthrown. That was the immediate occasion, but the words have a perfectly general—a universal—meaning.

575. The word I have translated *farthing* is *naqīr*, the groove in a date stone, a thing of no value whatever. Close-fistedness and envy are among the worst forms of selfishness, and appear specially incongruous in people of power, authority, or influence, from whom is expected generosity in giving and generosity in seeing other people's prosperity or happiness.

54. Or do they envy mankind
For what God hath given them
Of his bounty ? But We
Had already given the people
Of Abraham the Book
And Wisdom, and conferred
Upon them a great kingdom.⁵⁷⁶

55. Some of them believed,
And some of them averted
Their faces from him : and enough
Is Hell for a burning fire.⁵⁷⁷

56. Those who reject
Our Signs, We shall soon
Cast into the Fire :
As often as their skins
Are roasted through,
We shall change them
For fresh skins,
That they may taste
The Penalty : for God
Is Exalted in Power, Wise.

57. But those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness,
We shall soon admit to Gardens,
With rivers flowing beneath,—
Their eternal home :
Therein shall they have
Companions pure and holy :⁵⁷⁸
We shall admit them
To shades, cool and ever
deepening.⁵⁷⁹

58. God doth command you
To render back your Trusts
To those to whom they are due ;
And when ye judge

٥٣- أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ
عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا ۝

٥٥- فَبَيْنَهُمْ مَنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ
صَدَّ عَنْهُ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا ۝

٥٦- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا
كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا
غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ۝

٥٧- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
لَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ
وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ۝

٥٨- إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ
إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ

576. Such as the kingdoms of David and Solomon, for they had international fame.

577. Envy is like an internal fire, which is in itself a hell.

578. Cf. ii. 25 and n. 44.

579. The Garden is contrasted with the Fire : the shade is contrasted with the roasting. Evil grows with what it feeds on. So goodness and felicity grow with their practice. The good may be alone to start with, but (unlike evil ones) they get holy Companions. Just as spiritual agony increases with what it suffers (typified by fresh skins growing as the old ones burn out), so spiritual felicity finds deeper and deeper meaning (typified by the shades in a Garden, which grow deeper and cooler as you proceed into the interior).

Between man and man,
That ye judge with justice :
Verily how excellent
Is the teaching which He giveth
you !
For God is He Who heareth
And seeth all things.

59. O ye who believe !
Obey God, and obey the Apostle,
And those charged
With authority among you.⁵⁸⁰
If ye differ in anything
Among yourselves, refer it
To God and His Apostle,
If ye do believe in God
And the Last Day :
That is best, and most suitable
For final determination.

SECTION 9.

60. Hast thou not turned
Thy vision to those⁵⁸¹
Who declare that they believe
In the revelations
That have come to thee
And to those before thee ?
Their (real) wish is
To resort together for judgment
(In their disputes)
To the Evil One,
Though they were ordered
To reject him.
But Satan's wish
Is to lead them astray
Far away (from the Right).

61. When it is said to them :
"Come to what God hath revealed,

بَيْنَ النَّاسِ
أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْظُمُ بِهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ٥

٥٩- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
اطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَاطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ
مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ
فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
فَ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ٥

٦٠- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ
يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْكَ
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُتَخَفَكُمُ
إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ
وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ
وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا
بَعِيدًا ٥

٦١- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَى مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ

580. *Uli-l-amr* = those charged with authority or responsibility or decision, or the settlement of affairs. All ultimate authority rests in God. Men of God derive their authority from Him. As Islam makes no sharp division between sacred and secular affairs, it expects ordinary governments to be imbued with righteousness, and stand in the place of the righteous Imām, and we must respect and obey such authority ; otherwise there will be no order or discipline. Where, in actual fact, there is a sharp division between law and morality, between secular and religious affairs, as is the case in most countries at the present day. Islam still expects secular authority to be exercised in righteousness, and on that condition, enjoins obedience to such authority.

581. The immediate reference was to the Hypocrites (*Munāfiqīn*) of Medina, but the words are general, and the evil of hypocrisy has to be dealt with in all ages. The type of these men is what is called Mr. Facing-both-ways in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." Such men declare that they are always with the Right, but calmly intrigue with Evil and Injustice, and even make Injustice their judge if their personal interests are served in that way.

And to the Apostle " :
Thou seest the Hypocrites avert
Their faces from thee in disgust.

62. How then, when they are
Seized by misfortune,
Because of the deeds
Which their hands have sent forth?
Then they come to thee,
Swearing by God :
" We meant no more
Than good-will and conciliation !"

63. Those men,—God knows
What is in their hearts ;
So keep clear of them,⁵⁸²
But admonish them,
And speak to them a word
To reach their very souls.

64. We sent not an Apostle,
But to be obeyed, in accordance
With the Will of God.
If they had only,
When they were unjust
To themselves,
Come unto thee
And asked God's forgiveness,
And the Apostle had asked
Forgiveness for them,
They would have found
God indeed Oft-returning,
Most Merciful.

65. But no, by thy Lord,
They can have
No (real) Faith,
Until they make thee judge
In all disputes between them,
And find in their souls
No resistance against
Thy decisions, but accept
Them with the fullest conviction.⁵⁸³

وَالرَّسُولَ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ
عَنْكَ صُدُودًا ۝

٦٢- فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ
بِمَا قَدْ مَتَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ
ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ ۖ
بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ أَرْدُنَا إِلَّا لِحَسَانِكَ وَتَوْفِيقِكَ ۝

٦٣- أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
فَاعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ
وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا ۝

٦٤- وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رُسُولٍ
إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ
وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ
لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ۝

٦٥- فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
حَتَّى يَحْكُمَوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ
ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ
حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ۝

582. How should hypocrites be treated? To take them into your confidence would of course be foolish. To wage unrelenting war against them may destroy the hope of reforming them and purging them of their hypocrisy. The man of God keeps clear of their wiles, but at the same time, does not hesitate to show them the error of their ways, nor to put in a word in season, to penetrate their hearts and win them back to God.

583 The test of true Faith is not mere lip profession, but bringing all our doubts and disputes to the one in whom we profess faith. Further, when a decision is given we are not only to accept it, but find in our inmost souls no difficulty and no resistance, but on the contrary a joyful acceptance springing from the conviction of our own faith.

66. If We had ordered them
To sacrifice their lives
Or to leave their homes,
Very few of them
Would have done it : ⁵⁸⁴
But if they had done
What they were (actually) told,
It would have been best
For them, and would have gone
Farthest to strengthen their (faith) ;

٦٦- وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنِ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ
أَوْ اخْرُجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ
مَا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِنْهُمْ
وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَثْبِيثًا ۝

67. And We should then have
Given them from Our Presence
A great reward ;

٦٧- وَإِذَا لَا تَجِدُهُمْ
مِّنْ لَّدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

68. And We should have
Shown them the Straight Way. ⁵⁸⁵

٦٨- وَلَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ۝

69. All who obey God
And the Apostle
Are in the company
Of those on whom
Is the Grace of God,—
Of the Prophets (who teach),
The Sincere (lovers of Truth),
The Witnesses (who testify),
And the Righteous (who do good) :
Ah ! what a beautiful Fellowship ! ⁵⁸⁶

٦٩- وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ
وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ
وَحَسَنَ أَوْلِيَّكَ رَفِيقًا ۝

584. The highest in faith willingly sacrifice their lives, their homes, and all that they hold dearest, in the cause of God. Those whose faith is not so strong are expected at least to do what a loyal member of any society does, submit his doubts and disputes to the head of the society and cheerfully accept his decision and submit to it. The contrast is between the Hypocrites who will not even do this, and the really devoted men and women who would voluntarily sacrifice their lives.

585. Four advantages of obedience to God are mentioned, in the order in which they will appeal to the beginner in faith : (1) his own benefit ("best for them") ; (2) strengthening of his faith, as he becomes more and more at home in the spiritual world ; (3) reward from God's own Presence, such intense conviction that no further arguments are needed ; (4) the Straight Way, in which there is no doubt or difficulty whatever in our practical conduct.

586. A passage of the deepest spiritual meaning.. Even the humblest man who accepts Faith and does good becomes at once an accepted member of a great and beautiful spiritual Fellowship. It is a company which lives perpetually in the sunshine of God's Grace. (This passage partly illustrates Q.i.5.) It is glorious hierarchy, of which four grades are specified : (1) The highest is that of the Prophets or Apostles, who get plenary inspiration from God and who teach mankind by example and precept. That rank in Islam is held by Muhammad Mustafa. (2) The next are those whose badge is sincerity and truth ; they love and support the truth with their person, their means, their influence, and all that is theirs. That rank was held by the special Companions of Muhammad, among whom the type was that of Hadhrat Abū Bakr Siddiq. (3) The next are the noble army of Witnesses, who testify to the truth. The testimony may be by martyrdom, as in the case of Imāms Hasan and Husain. Or it may be by the tongue of the true Preacher or the pen of the devoted scholar, or the life of the man devoted to service. (4) Lastly, there is the large company of Righteous people, the ordinary folk who do their ordinary business, but always in a righteous way. They are the rank and file of the beautiful Fellowship, in which each has his place and yet all feel that they derive glory from the common association.


70. Such is the Bounty
From God : and sufficient
Is it that God knoweth all.⁵⁸⁷

٤- ذَٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عِلْمًا ۝

C. 64.—Keep together in your noble Brotherhood :

- (iv. 71-91.) Share its joy and sorrows : strive
And fight the good fight, and never fear :
For this life is short, and the Hereafter
Eternal. Allow not yourselves to be drawn
Into unbelief and cowardice :
Maintain the Right. Protect yourselves
Against Hypocrites and Deserters,
But pursue them not unrelentingly.

SECTION 10.

71.  ye who believe !
Take your precautions,
And either go forth in parties
Or go forth all together.⁵⁸⁸
72. There are certainly among you
Men who would tarry behind :⁵⁸⁹
If a misfortune befalls you,
They say : " God did favour us
In that we were not
Present among them."
73. But if good fortune comes to you
From God, they would be sure
To say—as if there had never been
Ties of affection between you
and them—
"Oh ! I wish I had been with them ;
A fine thing should I then
Have made of it !" ⁵⁹⁰

٤١- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اخذُوا حِزْبًا
فَأَنفِرُوا ثُبَاتٍ أَوْ تَنفِرُوا جَمِيعًا ۝

٤٢- وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ لَمَن لَّيِّطُتَن ۖ
فَإِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا قَدْ أَنعَمَ
اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا إِذْ لَمْ أَكُنْ مَعَهُمْ شَهِيدًا ۝

٤٣- وَلَئِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ
لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَن لَّمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ
مَوَدَّةٌ يَلْبِغْتَنِي كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ
فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ۝

587. If a generous General gives the private soldier the privilege of sitting with his comrades and officers, high and low, in one common Brotherhood, people may perhaps wonder : how may this be ? If we are admitted to that Fellowship, we want to know more. It is enough to us that God knows our humility and our unworthiness, and with His full knowledge admits us to that glorious Fellowship !

588. No fight should be undertaken without due preparations and precautions. When these are taken, we must go boldly forward. "Go forth" is therefore repeated for emphasis. But we must go forth in a collective spirit, and not in a selfish spirit—either in small parties or all together, as our Leader determines. We must not tarry like the doubter in the next two verses.

589. The doubter detaches himself in thought and action from the community. If the general body has a reverse, he blesses God that he was not among them, instead of being ashamed of himself for desertion. If the general body wins a success, he does not rejoice for the common cause, but only regrets for himself that he was not there to share in the glory and the gains !

590. Just a selfish man's thought. Such men are far from being a source of strength to their community. They are no use in a fight, and the next verse by implication discards them.

74. Let those fight
In the cause of God
Who sell the life of this world
For the Hereafter,⁵⁹¹
To him who fighteth
In the cause of God,—
Whether he is slain
Or gets victory—
Soon shall We give him
A reward of great (value).

٤٤- فَلْيُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
الَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ
وَمَنْ يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ
فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيَهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

75. And why should ye not
Fight in the cause of God
And of those who, being weak,⁵⁹²
Are ill-treated (and oppressed)?—
Men, women, and children,
Whose cry is : " Our Lord !
Rescue us from this town,
Whose people are oppressors ;
And raise for us from Thee
One who will protect ;
And raise for us from Thee
One who will help ! " ⁵⁹³

٤٥- وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ
الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ
هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا
وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا
وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا ۝

76. Those who believe
Fight in the cause of God,
And those who reject Faith
Fight in the cause of Evil :
So fight ye against the
Friends ⁵⁹⁴ of Satan : feeble indeed
Is the cunning of Satan.

٤٦- الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ
الطَّاغُوتِ فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ
إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ۝

SECTION 11.

77. Hast thou not turned
Thy vision to those

٤٧- أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ

591. It is not every one,—least of all, poltroons and faint-hearted persons—who is fit to fight in the cause of God. To do so is a privilege, and those who understand the privilege are prepared to sacrifice all their interests in this life, and this life itself ; for they know that it is the sacrifice of something fleeting and of little value, for the sake of something everlasting, and of immense value. Whether (in appearance) they win or lose, in reality they win the prize for which they are fighting,—viz., honour and glory in the sight of God. Note that the only alternatives here are Death or Victory ! The true fighter knows no defeat.

592. *Mustadh'af* = one reckoned weak, and therefore ill-treated and oppressed. Cf. iv. 98, and vii. 150.

593. Even from the human point of view the cause of God is the cause of justice, the cause of the oppressed. In the great persecution, before Mecca was won again, what sorrows, threats, tortures, and oppressions, were suffered by those whose faith was unshaken ? Muhammad's life and that of his adherents was threatened : they were mocked, assaulted, insulted and beaten ; those within the power of the enemy were put into chains and cast into prison ; others were boycotted, and shut out of trade, business, and social intercourse ; they could not even buy the food they wanted, or perform their religious duties. The persecution was redoubled for the believing slaves, women, and children after the Hijrat. Their cry for a protector and helper from God was answered when Muhammad the Chosen One brought freedom and peace to Mecca again.

594. *Auliya*, plural of *wali*, friend, supporter, protector, patron ; from the same root as *maula*, for which see iv. 33, n. 543.

Who were told to hold back⁵⁹⁵
 Their hands (from fight)
 But establish regular prayers
 And spend in regular Charity ?
 When (at length) the order
 For fighting was issued to them,
 Behold ! a section of them
 Feared men as—
 Or even more than—
 They should have feared God :
 They said : " Our Lord !
 Why hast Thou ordered us
 To fight ? Wouldst Thou not
 Grant us respite
 To our (natural) term,⁵⁹⁶
 Near (enough) ?" Say : " Short
 Is the enjoyment of this world :
 The Hereafter is the best
 For those who do right :
 Never will ye be
 Dealt with unjustly
 In the very least !

78. " Wherever ye are,
 Death will find you out,
 Even if ye are in towers
 Built up strong and high !"

If some good befalls them,
 They say, " This is from God " ;
 But if evil, they say,
 " This is from thee" (O Prophet).⁵⁹⁷

قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ
 وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
 فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ
 يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ
 أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً
 وَقَالُوا لَرَبِّنَا لِمَ كُتِبَتْ
 عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالُ
 لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ
 قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ
 وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِمَنِ اتَّقَى
 وَلَا تَظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ۝

٤٨-اَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَدْرِكْكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ
 فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشِيدَةٍ ۚ وَاِنْ تُصِيبْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ
 يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
 وَاِنْ تُصِيبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ
 يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ

595. Before the command for fighting was issued there were some who were impatient, and could scarcely be held back. They wanted fighting from human motives,—pugnacity, the love of plunder, hatred against their enemies, the gaining of personal ends. Fighting from such motives is wrong at all times. When the testing time came, and they had to fight, not for their own hand, but for a Sacred Cause, in which there was much suffering and little personal gain, the Hypocrites held back and were afraid.

596. " Our natural term of life," they would say, "is short enough ; why should we jeopardize it by fighting in which there is no personal gain ?" The answer is begun in this verse and continued in the next.

Briefly, the answer is : (1) in any case the pleasures of this world are short : this life is fleeting ; the first thing for a righteous man to do is to emancipate himself from its obsessions ; (2) to do your duty is to do right ; therefore turn your attention mainly to duty ; (3) when duty calls for self-sacrifice, be sure that God's call is never unjust, and never such as to exceed your capacity ; and (4) if you fear death, you will not by fear escape death ; it will find you out wherever you are ; why not face it boldly when duty calls ?

597. The Hypocrites were inconsistent, and in this reflect unregenerate mankind. If a disaster happens, due to their own folly, they blame somebody else ; but if they are fortunate, they claim reflected credit by pretending that Heaven has favoured them because of their own superior merits. The modern critic discards even this pretence, eliminates Heaven altogether, and claims all credit direct to himself, unless he brings in blind Chance, but that he does mostly to "explain" misfortune. If we look to the ultimate Cause of all things, all things come from God. But if we look to the proximate cause of things, our own merit is so small, that we can hardly claim credit for good ourselves with any fairness. In God's hand is all good : iii. 26. On the other hand, the proximate cause of our evil is due to some wrong in our own inner selves ; for never are we dealt with unjustly in the very least : iv. 77.

Say : "All things are from God."
But what hath come
To these people,
That they fail
To understand
A single fact ?

79. Whatever good, (O man !)
Happens to thee, is from God ;
But whatever evil happens
To thee, is from thy (own) soul.
And We have sent thee
As an Apostle ⁵⁹⁸
To (instruct) mankind.
And enough is God
For a witness.

80. He who obeys
The Apostle, obeys God :
But if any turn away,
We have not sent thee
To watch over
Their (evil deeds).⁵⁹⁹

81. They have "Obedience"
On their lips ; but
When they leave thee,
A section of them
Meditate all night
On things very different
From what thou tellest them.
But God records
Their nightly (plots) :
So keep clear of them,
And put thy trust in God,
And enough is God

قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ
فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ
لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا ٥

٤٩- مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ
وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنَ نَفْسِكَ
وَ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا
وَ كَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ٥

٨٠- مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ
وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى
فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ٥

٨١- وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ
فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِندِكَ كَفَى طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ
غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ
وَ اللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبْهِنُونَ
فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
وَ تَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ٥

598. To blame a man of God for our misfortunes is doubly unjust. For he comes to save us from misfortune, and it is because we flout him or pay no heed to him, that our own rebellion brings its own punishment. If we realise this truth we shall be saved from two sins : (1) the sin of injustice to God's Messengers, who come for our good, and not for our harm ; (2) the sin of not realising our own shortcomings or rebellion, and thus living in spiritual darkness. If the Message is from God, that carries its own authority : "enough is God for a witness."

599. The Apostle was sent to preach, guide, instruct, and show the Way,—not to drive people to good, or to detect all that was evil. That is not God's Plan, which trains the human Will. The Apostle's duty is therefore to convey the Message of God, in all the ways of persuasion that are open to him. If men perversely disobey that Message, they are not disobeying him but they are disobeying God. In the same way those who obey the Message are obeying God. They are not obliging the Messenger ; they are merely doing their duty.

As a disposer of affairs.⁶⁰⁰

82. Do they not consider
The Qur-ān (with care)?
Had it been from other
Than God, they would surely
Have found therein
Much discrepancy.⁶⁰¹

83. When there comes to them
Some matter touching
(Public) safety or fear,
They divulge it.
If they had only referred it
To the Apostle, or to those
Charged with authority
Among them, the proper
Investigators would have
Tested it from them (direct).
Were it not for the Grace
And Mercy of God unto you,
All but a few of you
Would have fallen
Into the clutches of Satan.⁶⁰²

84. When fight in God's cause—
Thou art held responsible
Only for thyself—
And rouse the Believers.
It may be that God
Will restrain the fury

وَكُفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ۝
۸۲- أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ط
وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ
لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ۝

۸۳- وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ
أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ ط
وَلَوْ رُدُّوهٗ إِلَى السَّرِيسَةِ
وَالِ إِلَى أُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ
لَعَلِمَ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ ط
وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ
لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝

۸۴- فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسُكَ وَخَرِّصِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَكْفِ بِكَ

600. If we trust to people who are not true, they are more likely to hinder than to help. But God is All-good as well as All-powerful, and all our affairs are best entrusted to His care. He is the best Guardian of all interests.

Therefore we should not trust the lip professions of Hypocrites, but trust in God. Nor should our confidence in God be shaken by any secret plots that enemies hatch against us. We should take all human precautions against them, but having done so, we should put our trust in God, Who knows the inner working of events better than any human mind can conceive.

601. The unity of the Qur-ān is admittedly greater than that of any other sacred book. And yet how can we account for it except through the unity of God's purpose and design? From a mere human point of view, we should have expected much discrepancy, because 1) the Messenger who promulgated it was not a learned man or philosopher, (2) it was promulgated at various times and in various circumstances, and (3) it is addressed to all grades of mankind. Yet, when properly understood its various pieces fit together better than a jig-saw puzzle even when arranged without any regard to chronological order. There was just the One Inspirer and the One Inspired.

602. In times of war or public panic, thoughtless repetition of gossip is rightly restrained by all effective States. If false, such news may cause needless alarm: if true, it may frighten the timid and cause some misgivings even to the bravest, because the counterpart of it—the preparations made to meet the danger—is not known. Thoughtless news, true or false, may also encourage the enemy. The proper course is quietly to hand all news direct to those who are in a position to investigate it. They can then sift it and take suitable measures to checkmate the enemy. Not to do so, but to deal with news either thoughtlessly or maliciously, is to fall directly into the snares of Evil.

Of the Unbelievers ;
For God is the strongest
In might and in punishment.⁶⁰³

85. Whoever recommends
And helps a good cause
Becomes a partner therein :
And whoever recommends
And helps an evil cause,
Shares in its burden :
And God hath power ⁶⁰⁴
Over all things.
86. **W**hen a (courteous) greeting
Is offered you, meet it
With a greeting still more
Courteous, or (at least)
Of equal courtesy.
God takes careful account ⁶⁰⁵
Of all things.
87. God ! There is no god
But He : of a surety
He will gather you together
Against the Day of Judgment,
About which there is no doubt.
And whose word can be
Truer than God's ?

SECTION 12.

88. **W**hy should ye be
Divided into two parties

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا^ط
وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنكِيلًا
٨٥- مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ
نَصِيبٌ مِّنْهَا وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً
يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا^ط
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقِيتًا^٥

٨٦- وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ
فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا
أَوْ رُدُّوهَا^ط
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا^٥
٨٧- اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
لَيَجْعَلَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ^ط
وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا^٥

٨٨- فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَةً

603. The courage of Muḥammad was as notable as his wisdom, his gentleness, and his trust in God. Facing fearful odds, he often stood alone, and took the whole responsibility on himself. But his example and visible trust in God inspired and roused the Muslims, and also—speaking purely from a human point of view—restrained the fury of his enemies. When we consider that he was God's inspired Messenger, to carry out His Plan, we can see that nothing can resist that Plan. If the enemy happens to have strength, power, or resources, God's strength, power, and resources are infinitely greater. If the enemy is meditating punishment on the righteous for their righteousness, God's punishment for such wickedness will be infinitely greater and more effective.

604. In this fleeting world's chances God's providence and justice may not always appear plain to our eyes. But we are asked to believe that if we help and support a good cause, we share in all its credit and in its eventual victory. And conversely, we cannot support a bad cause without sharing in all its evil consequences. If appearances seem against this faith, let us not be deceived by appearances. For God has power over all things.

605. The necessary correlative to the command to fight in a good cause is the command to cultivate sweetness and cordiality in our manners at all times. For fighting is an exceptional necessity, while the sweetness of daily human intercourse is a normal need. Further, we give kindness and courtesy without asking, and return it if possible in even better terms than we received, or at least in equally courteous terms. For we are all creatures of One God, and shall be brought together before Him.

About the Hypocrites ?⁶⁰⁶
 God hath upset them
 For their (evil) deeds.
 Would ye guide those
 Whom God hath thrown
 Out of the Way ? For those
 Whom God hath thrown
 Out of the Way, never
 Shalt thou find the Way.

89. They but wish that ye
 Should reject Faith,
 As they do, and thus be
 On the same footing (as they) :
 But take not friends
 From their ranks
 Until they flee⁶⁰⁷
 In the way of God
 (From what is forbidden).
 But if they turn renegades,
 Seize them and slay them
 Wherever ye find them ;
 And (in any case) take
 No friends or helpers
 From their ranks ;—

90. Except those who join
 A group between whom
 And you there is a treaty⁶⁰⁸

وَاللّٰهُ اَرْكَسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوْا
 اَتُرِيْدُونَ اَنْ تَهْدُوْا مَنْ اَضَلَّ اللّٰهُ
 وَمَنْ يُّضِلِلِ اللّٰهُ
 فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيْلًا

۸۹-وَذُوْا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا كَمَا كَفَرُوْا
 فَتَكُوْنُوْنَ سَوَآءٍ
 فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوْا مِنْهُمْ اَوْلِيَاءَ
 حَتّٰى يُّهَاجِرُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ
 فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
 فَخُذُوْهُمْ وَاَقْتُلُوْهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوْهُمْ
 وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوْا مِنْهُمْ وِلِيَّآءَ وَلَا نَصِيْرًا

۹۰-اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ يَصِلُوْنَ اِلَى قَوْمِهِمْ بَيْنَكُمْ
 وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِّيثَاقٌ

606. When the desertion of the Hypocrites at Uhud nearly caused a disaster to the Muslim cause there was great feeling among the Muslims of Medina against them. One party wanted to put them to the sword : another to leave them alone. The actual policy pursued avoided both extremes, and was determined by these verses. It was clear that they were a danger to the Muslim community if they were admitted into its counsels, and in any case they were a source of demoralisation. But while every caution was used, no extreme measures were taken against them. On the contrary, they were given a chance of making good. If they made a sacrifice for the cause ("flee from what is forbidden;" see next verse), their conduct purged their previous cowardice, and their sincerity entitled them to be taken back. But if they deserted the Muslim community again, they were treated as enemies, with the additional penalty of desertion which is enforced by all nations actually at war. Even so, a humane exception was made in the two cases specified in iv. 90.

607. *Flee* : the verbal form from which the noun *hijrat* is derived. Bukhārī interprets this rightly as fleeing from all that is forbidden. This would include hijrat in the technical sense of leaving a place in which the practice of religion is not allowed. But it is more general. In time of war, if a man is willing to submit to discipline and refrain from infringing orders issued, he has proved his fidelity and may be treated as a member of the community at war.

On the other hand if he by false pretences comes into the inner counsels merely to betray them he may rightly be treated as a traitor or deserter and be punished for his treason or desertion ; or if he escapes, he can be treated as an enemy and is entitled to no mercy. He is worse than an enemy ; he has claimed to be of you in order to spy on you, and been all the time helping the enemy.

608. *Except* : the exception refers to "seize them and slay them", the death penalty for repeated desertion. Even after such desertion exemption is granted in two cases. One is where the deserter took asylum with a tribe with whom there was a treaty of peace and amity. Presumably such a tribe (even though outside the pale of Islam) might be trusted to keep the man from fighting against the forces of Islam—in the modern phrase, to disarm him and render him harmless. The second case for exemption is where the man from his own heart desires never to take up arms against Islam, though he does not wish to join the forces of Islam, to fight against a hostile tribe (perhaps his own) fighting against Islam. But he must make a real approach, giving guarantees of his sincerity. In the modern phrase he would be "on parole". But this provision is much milder than that in modern military codes, which grant the privilege only to enemy prisoners, not to those who have deserted from the army granting them parole. The Hypocrites were in that position, but humanity as well as policy treated them with great leniency.

(Of peace), or those who approach⁶⁰⁹
 You with hearts restraining
 Them from fighting you
 As well as fighting their own
 People. If God had pleased,
 He could have given them
 Power over you, and they
 Would have fought you :
 Therefore if they withdraw
 From you but fight you not,
 And (instead) send you
 (Guarantees of) peace, then God
 Hath opened no way
 For you (to war against them).

أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ
 أَنْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ
 وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتِلُوكُمْ
 فَإِنْ اعْتَذَلُوكُمْ
 فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ
 وَالْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ
 فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ۝

91. Others you will find
 That wish to gain
 Your confidence as well
 As that of their people :
 Every time they are sent back⁶¹⁰
 To temptation, they succumb
 Thereto : if they withdraw not
 From you nor give you (guarantees)
 Of peace besides
 Restraining their hands,
 Seize them and slay them
 Wherever ye get them :
 In their case
 We have provided you
 With a clear argument
 Against them.

۹۱- سَتَجِدُونَ آخَرِينَ
 يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ
 كُلَّمَا رُزُّوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكَسُوا فِيهَا
 فَإِنْ لَمْ يَعْتَزْلُوكُمْ
 وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُرُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ
 فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ
 وَأُولَئِكَ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا
 مُبِينًا ۝

C. 65.—The lives of those who believe

(iv. 92-104.) Are sacred : if one is slain
 By mistake, full compensation
 Should be made. Nor should
 A stranger, even in time of war,
 Be treated as an enemy, without

609. *Approach* or come : refers not to the physical act of coming, but to the mental attitude : the heart is mentioned for sincerity. When they sincerely promise not to fight against you, do not pursue them. Remember that if they had fought against you, your difficulties would have been increased. Their neutrality itself may be a great advantage to you. So long as you are satisfied that they are sincere and their acts support their declarations of peace with you, you should not consider yourself justified in pursuing them and warring against them.

610. As opposed to the two classes of deserters to whom clemency may be shown, there is a class which is treacherous and dangerous and cannot be left alone. They try to win your confidence, and are all the time in the confidence of the enemy. Every time they get a chance, they succumb to the temptation of double-dealing. The best way of dealing with them is to treat them as open enemies. Keep them not in your midst. If they give you guarantees of peace and do not actually fight against you, well and good. If not, they are deserters actively fighting in the ranks of the enemy. They have openly given you proof, and you can fairly seize and slay them in war as deserters and enemies.

The fullest investigation. Live not
 In places hostile to Islam,
 If ye are able to migrate,—
 And spacious is God's earth.
 Devotion and prayer may be
 Shortened in times of danger.
 Take every precaution for safety.
 But be bold and undaunted in fight.

SECTION 13


92. **N**ever should a Believer
 Kill a Believer ; but
 (If it so happens) by mistake,⁶¹¹
 (Compensation is due) :
 If one (so) kills a Believer,
 It is ordained that he
 Should free a believing slave,
 And pay compensation
 To the deceased's family,
 Unless they remit it freely.
 If the deceased belonged
 To a people at war with you,
 And he was a Believer,
 The freeing of a believing slave
 (Is enough). If he belonged
 To a people with whom
 Ye have a treaty of mutual
 Alliance, compensation should
 Be paid to his family,
 And a believing slave be freed.
 For those who find this
 Beyond their means, (is prescribed)
 A fast for two months
 Running : by way of repentance
 To God : for God hath
 All knowledge and all wisdom.

٩٢- وَمَا كَانَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا
 إِلَّا خَطَاً وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا
 خَطَاً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ
 وَدِيَّةٌ مُسْلَمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ
 إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَّدَّقُوا
 فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنَ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ
 وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ
 وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنَ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ
 مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَّةٌ مُسْلَمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ
 وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ
 فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ
 فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ
 وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا


611. Life is absolutely sacred in the Islamic Brotherhood. But mistakes will sometimes happen as did happen in the *mélée* at Uhud, when some Muslims were killed (being mistaken for the enemy) by Muslims. There was no guilty intention : therefore, there was no murder. But all the same, the family of the deceased was entitled to compensation unless they freely remitted it, and in addition it was provided that the unfortunate man who made the mistake should free a believing slave. Thus a leplorable mistake was made the occasion for winning the liberty of a slave who was a Believer, or Islam discountenances slavery. The compensation could only be paid if the deceased belonged to a Muslim society or to some people at peace with the Muslim society. Obviously it could not be paid if, though the deceased was a Believer, his people were at war with the Muslim society : even if his people could be reached, it is not fair to increase the resources of the enemy. If the deceased was himself an enemy at war, obviously the laws of war justify his being killed in warfare unless he surrendered. If the man who took life unintentionally has no means from which to free a believing slave or to give compensation, he must still by an act of strict self-denial (fasting for two whole months running) show that he is cognizant of the grave nature of the deed he has done and sincerely repentant. I take this to apply to all three cases mentioned : that is, where a Believer killed a Believer unintentionally and the deceased (1) belonged to the same community as you, or (2) belonged to a community at war with you, or (3) belonged to a community in alliance with you.

93. If a man kills a Believer
Intentionally, his recompense⁶¹²
Is Hell, to abide therein
(For ever) : and the wrath
And the curse of God
Arc upon him, and
A dreadful penalty
Is prepared for him.

٩٣- وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا
فَجَزَاءُ ۙ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا
وَعُذُوبَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ
وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ۝

94.  ye who believe !
When ye go abroad⁶¹³
In the cause of God,
Investigate carefully,
And say not to any one
Who offers you a salutation :
" Thou art none of a Believer !"—
Coveting the perishable goods
Of this life : with God
Are profits and spoils abundant.
Even thus were ye yourselves
Before, till God conferred
On you His favours : therefore
Carefully investigate.
For God is well aware
Of all that ye do.

٩٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا
لِمَنْ أَتَىٰ إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامُ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا
تَتَّبِعُونَ عَرَصَ الْحَيَوةِ الدُّنْيَا
فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَغَازِمُ كَثِيرَةٌ
كَذَلِكَ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ
فَسَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝

95.  Not equal are those
Believers who sit (at home)
And receive no hurt,
And those who strive
And fight in the cause
Of God with their goods
And their persons.
God hath granted
A grade higher to those
Who strive and fight

٩٥- لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
غَيْرُ أُولَى الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ
فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ

612. What is mentioned here is the punishment in the Hereafter, the spiritual consequences. The legal consequences, enforceable by human society, are mentioned in ii, 178, under the rules of *Qisās*. That is, a life should be taken for a life destroyed, but this should be on a scale of equality : a single murder should not commit a whole tribe to a perpetual blood-feud, as in the days of ignorance. But if the heirs of the man slain accept reasonable compensation, this should be accepted and the taking of a life for a life should be put a stop to. This course leads to the saving of life, and is commanded to men of understanding.

613. *Go abroad* : *ḍaharaba*—to travel, to go abroad, either for *jihād*, or for honest trade or other service, which if done with pure motives, counts as service in the cause of God. The immediate occasion was in connection with *jihād*, but the words are general and can be applied to all circumstances in which a man falls through spiritual pride : he thinks he is not as other men are, but forgets that, but for the grace of God, he is himself a sinner ! In war (or in peace) we are apt to catch some worldly advantage by pluming ourselves on our superiority in Faith. In war perhaps we want to gain glory or booty by killing a supposed enemy ! In peace we make light of other people in order to steal some advantage or material gain ! This is wrong. The righteous man, if he is really out in God's service, has more abundant and richer gifts to think of in the spiritual world.

With their goods and persons
Than to those who sit (at home)
Unto all (in Faith)⁶¹⁴
Hath God promised good :
But those who strive and fight
Hath He distinguished
Above those who sit (at home)
By a special reward,—

96. Ranks specially bestowed
By Him, and Forgiveness
And Mercy. For God is
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

SECTION 14.

97. **W**hen angels take
The souls of those
Who die in sin
Against their souls,⁶¹⁵
They say : " In what (plight)
Were ye ? " They reply :
" Weak and oppressed
Were we in the earth."
They say : " Was not
The earth of God
Spacious enough for you
To move yourselves away
(From evil) ? " Such men
Will find their abode
In Hell,—What an evil
Refuge !—

عَلَى الْقُعُودِينَ دَرَجَةً^١
وَكَلَّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى^٢
وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ
عَلَى الْقُعُودِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا^٣

٩٦- دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً^٤
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا^٥

٩٧- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
ظَالِمِينَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ
قَالُوا فِيْهِمْ كُنْتُمْ
قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ^١
قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً^٢
فَتُهَا جَرُّوْا فِيْهَا^٣
قَالُوا لَيْسَ مَا وَلَّهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ^٤
وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا^٥

614. God's goodness is promised to all people of Faith. But there are degrees among men and women of Faith. There are people with natural inertia : they do the minimum that is required of them, but no more. There are people who are weak in will : they are easily frightened. There are people who are so strong in will and so firm in faith that they are determined to conquer every obstacle, whether in their own physical or other infirmities or in the external world around them. In a time of jihād, when people give their all, and even their lives, for the common cause, they must be accounted more glorious than those who sit at home, even though they have good-will to the cause and carry out minor duties in aid. The special reward of such self-sacrifice is high spiritual rank, and special forgiveness and mercy, as proceeding from the direct approbation and love of God.

615. The immediate occasion for this passage was the question of migration (*hijrat*) from places where Islam was being persecuted and suppressed. Obviously the duty of Muslims was to leave such places, even if it involved forsaking their homes, and join and strengthen the Muslim community among whom they could live in peace and with whom they could help in fighting the evils around them. But the meaning is wider. Islam does not say : " Resist not evil." On the contrary it requires a constant, unceasing struggle against evil. For such struggle it may be necessary to forsake home and unite and organise and join our brethren in assaulting and overthrowing the fortress of evil. For the Muslim's duty is not only to enjoin good but to prohibit evil. To make our assault we must be prepared to put ourselves in a position from which such assault would be possible, and God's earth is spacious enough for the purpose. " Position " includes not only local position, but moral and material position. For example, we must shun evil company where we cannot put it down, but organise a position from which we can put it down.

98. Except those who are
(Really) weak and oppressed—
Men, women, and children—
Who have no means
In their power, nor (a guide-post)⁶¹⁶
To direct their way.

٩٨- إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ۝

99. For these, there is hope
That God will forgive :
• For God doth blot out (sins)
And forgive again and again.

٩٩- فَأُولَٰئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُو عَنْهُمْ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفْوًا غَفُورًا ۝

100. He who forsakes his home
In the cause of God,
Finds in the earth
Many a refuge,
Wide and spacious :
Should he die
As a refugee from home
For God and His Apostle,
His reward becomes due
And sure with God :
And God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

١٠٠- وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرْعًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً ۚ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝

SECTION 15.

101. **W**hen ye travel
Through the earth,
There is no blame on you
If ye shorten your prayers, ⁶¹⁷
For fear the Unbelievers
May attack you :
For the Unbelievers are
Unto you open enemies.

١٠١- وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا أَعْدَاؤُكُمْ مُبِينًا ۝

616. If through physical, mental, or moral incapacity, we are unable to fight the good fight, we must rest content with putting up with evil and just guarding ourselves from it. God's gracious Mercy, will recognise and forgive our weakness if it is real weakness, and not merely an excuse.

617. Verse 101 gives permission to shorten congregational prayers when people are on a journey : verses 102-104 deal with cases when they are in danger at war, in face of the enemy. The shortening of congregational prayers in both cases is further governed as to details by the practice of the Apostle and his Companions. As to journeys, two questions arise : (1) what constitutes a journey for this purpose ? (2) is the fear of an attack an essential condition for the shortening of congregational prayers ? As to (1), it is best to leave the matter to discretion, having regard to all the circumstances of the journey, as in the case of the journeys which excuse a fast : see ii. 184, n. 190. The text leaves it to discretion. As to (2), the practice of the Apostle shows that danger is not an essential condition : it is merely mentioned as a possible incident. The Apostle usually shortened the prayers from four Rak'ats to two Rak'ats in *Zuhr* (midday prayer), *Asr* (afternoon prayer) and *Ishaa* (night prayer) : the other two are in any case short, *Fajr* (morning prayer) having two Rak'ats and *Magrib* (evening prayer) having three.

102. When thou (O Apostle)
 Art with them, and standest
 To lead them in prayer,
 Let one party of them
 Stand up (in prayer) with thee,
 Taking their arms with them :
 When they finish
 Their prostrations, let them
 Take their position in the rear,
 And let the other party come up—
 Which hath not yet prayed—
 And let them pray with thee,
 Taking all precautions,
 And bearing arms :
 The Unbelievers wish,
 If ye were negligent
 Of your arms and your baggage,
 To assault you in a single rush,⁶¹⁸
 But there is no blame on you
 If ye put away your arms
 Because of the inconvenience
 Of rain or because ye are ill ;
 But take (every) precaution
 For yourselves. For the
 Unbelievers
 God hath prepared
 A humiliating punishment.

103. When ye pass⁶¹⁹
 (Congregational) prayers,
 Celebrate God's praises,
 Standing, sitting down,
 Or lying down on your sides ;
 But when ye are free
 From danger, set up
 Regular Prayers :
 For such prayers
 Are enjoined on Believers
 At stated times.

١٠٢- وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقِمْ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ
 فَلْتَقُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ مَّعَكَ
 وَلْيَأْخُذُوا بِأَسْلِحَتِهِمْ فَاذًا سَجِدُوا
 فليَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ
 أُخْرَى لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ
 وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ
 وَذَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْ تَعْفُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ
 وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 مَّيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِنْ مَّطَرٍ
 أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضَى
 أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ
 وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ۝
 ١٠٣- فَاذًا أَقْضَيْتُمْ الصَّلَاةَ
 فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَمًا
 وَتَعُودُوا ۖ وَ عَلَى جُنُوبِكُمْ
 فَاذًا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِمْوا الصَّلَاةَ
 إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا
 مَّوْقُوتًا ۝

618. The congregational prayer in danger in face of the enemy rests on the principle that the congregation should be divided into two parties ; one party prays while the other watches the enemy, and then the second party comes up to prayers while the first falls back to face the enemy ; either party does only one or two Rak'ats, or about half the congregational prayer ; every precaution is taken to prevent a rush by the enemy ; even while at prayers armour and arms need not be put off except when rain is likely to cause inconvenience to the wearer and damage to the arms, or when illness or fatigue causes the wearer's strength to fail. Details can be varied according to circumstances as was actually done by the Apostle at different times.

619. Two interpretations are possible : (1) " when ye have finished congregational prayers ", or (2) "when (on account of extreme danger) ye have to pass over congregational prayers altogether,—even the shorter form indicated for times of danger" I prefer the latter, as it accords better with the following sentence, which allows you to remember God individually in any posture possible during the danger. But when the danger is past, the full prayers should be offered at the stated times.

104. And slacken not
In following up the enemy :
If ye are suffering hardships,
They are suffering similar
Hardships ; but ye have
Hope from God, while they ⁶²⁰
Have none. And God
Is full of knowledge and wisdom.

١٠٤- وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقُوَى
إِنْ تَكُونُوا تَالِئُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَالِئُونَ كَمَا
تَالِئُونَ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

١٠٤

C. 66.—Beware of treachery, that would use
(iv. 105-126.) The good and pious for its wicked
Ends : its plots will but recoil
On its own head. The righteous
Have no cause for secrecy, except
In doing good. 'Tis evil that
Misleads, deceives, and even dares
Deface fair Nature, as by God
Created. Shun all evil, and be firm
In righteousness and faith in God.

SECTION 16.

105. ~~We~~ We have sent down
To thee the Book in truth,
That thou mightest judge
Between men, as guided
By God : so be not (used)
As an advocate by those
Who betray their trust ; ⁶²¹

١٠٥- إِنْ أُنْزِلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابُ بِالْحَقِّ
لِنَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ
بِمَا أَرْسَلَ اللَّهُ
وَلَا تَكُنْ لِلْخَائِبِينَ خَصِيمًا ۝

106. But seek the forgiveness
Of God ; for God is
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

١٠٦- وَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝

620. Religion should be a source of strength and not of weakness in all our affairs. If we have to struggle hard and suffer hardships, those without faith have to do the same, with this difference, that the man of Faith is full of hope in God, whereas the man without Faith has nothing to sustain him.

621. The Commentators explain this passage with reference to the case of 'Ta'ima Ibn Ubairaq, who was nominally a Muslim but really a Hypocrite, and given to all sorts of wicked deeds. He was suspected of having stolen a set of armour, and when the trail was hot, he planted the stolen property into the house of a Jew, where it was found. The Jew denied the charge and accused 'Ta'ima, but the sympathies of the Muslim community were with 'Ta'ima on account of his nominal profession of Islam. The case was brought to the Apostle, who acquitted the Jew according to the strict principle of justice as "guided by God". Attempts were made to prejudice him and deceive him into using his authority to favour 'Ta'ima.

The general lesson is that the righteous man is faced with all sorts of subtle wiles : the wicked will try to appeal to his highest sympathies and most honourable motives to deceive him and use him as an instrument for defeating justice. He should be careful and cautious, and seek the help of God for protection against deception and for firmness in dealing the strictest justice without fear or favour. To do otherwise is to betray a sacred trust : the trustee must defeat all attempts made to mislead him.

107. Contend not on behalf
Of such as betray
Their own souls ; ⁶²²
For God loveth not
One given to perfidy
And crime ;

108. They may hide
(Their crimes) from men,
But they cannot hide
(Them) from God, seeing that
He is in their midst
When they plot by night,
In words that He cannot
Approve : and God
Doth compass round ⁶²³
All that they do.

109. Ah ! these are the sort
Of men on whose behalf
Ye may contend in this world ;
But who will contend with God
On their behalf on the Day
Of Judgment, or who
Will carry their affairs through ?

110. If any one does evil
Or wrongs his own soul,
But afterwards seeks
God's forgiveness, he will find
God Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

111. And if any one earns ⁶²⁴
Sin, he earns it against

١٠٧- وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ
أَنْفُسَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
مَنْ كَانَ خَوَّافًا أَشِيمًا ۝

١٠٨- يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ
وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَى
مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ۖ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ۝

١٠٩- هَآأَنْتُمْ هَآؤَآءُ
جَدَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ
فَبِمَنْ يُجَادِلُ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
أَمْ مَنْ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ۝

١١٠- وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ
ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ
يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝

١١١- وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُ

622. Our souls are a sort of trust with us. We have to guard them against all temptation. Those who surrender to crime or evil betray that trust. We are warned against being deceived into taking their part, induced either by plausible appearances, or by such incentives to partiality as that they belong to our own people or that some link connects them with us, whereas when we are out to do justice, we must not allow any irrelevant considerations to sway us.

623. The plots of sinners are known fully to God, and He can fully circumvent them if necessary, according to the fulness of His wisdom. The word used is : *Compass them round* : *muhit* : not only does God know all about it, but He is all round it ; if in His wisdom He allows it, it is not because He has complete control over it, but because having it as it were enclosed in a complete circle, He can use it to further His own Plan. Even out of evil He can bring good.

624. *Kasaba*=to earn, to gain, to work for something valuable, to lay up a provision for the future life. We do a day's labour to earn our livelihood : so in a spiritual sense, whatever good or evil we do in this life, earns us good or evil in the life to come. In verses 110-112 three cases are considered : (1) if we do ill and repent, God will forgive ; (2) if we do ill and do not repent, thinking that we can hide it, we are wrong ; nothing is hidden from God, and we shall suffer the full consequences in the life to come, for we can never evade our personal responsibility ; (3) if we do ill, great or small, and impute it to another, our original responsibility for the ill remains, but we add to it something else, for we tie round our necks the guilt of falsehood, which converts even our minor fault into a great sin, and in any case brands us even in this life with shame and ignominy.

His own soul : for God
Is full of knowledge and wisdom.

112. But if any one earns
A fault or a sin
And throws it on to one
That is innocent,
He carries (on himself)
(Both) a falsehood
And a flagrant sin.

SECTION 17.

113. But for the Grace of God
To thee and His Mercy,
A party of them would
Certainly have plotted
To lead thee astray.
But (in fact) they will only
Lead their own souls astray,
And to thee they can do
No harm in the least.
For God hath sent down
To thee the Book and Wisdom
And taught thee what thou
Knewest not (before) :
And great is the Grace
Of God unto thee.

114. In most of their secret talks
There is no good : but if
One exhorts to a deed
Of charity or justice
Or conciliation between men, ⁶²⁵
(Secrecy is permissible) :
To him who does this,
Seeking the good pleasure
Of God, We shall soon give
A reward of the highest (value).

عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

۱۱۲- وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا
ثُمَّ يَرْمِهَا بَرِيًّا
فَقَدْ أَحْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا
وَإِثْمًا مُبِينًا ۝

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۱۱۳- وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ
وَرَحْمَتُهُ
لَهَيَّتَ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُضِلُّوكَ
وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ
وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ۝

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۱۱۴- لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنْ نَجْوَاهُمْ
إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ
أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ
وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ
فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

625. Usually secrecy is for evil ends, or from questionable motives, or because the person seeking secrecy is ashamed of himself and knows that if his acts or motives became known, he would make himself odious. Islam therefore disapproves of secrecy and loves and enjoins openness in all consultations and doings. But there are three things in which secrecy is permissible, and indeed laudable, provided the motive be purely unselfish, to earn "the good pleasure of God": (1) if you are doing a deed of charity or beneficence, whether in giving material things or in helping in moral, intellectual, or spiritual matters; here publicity may not be agreeable to the recipient of your beneficence, and you have to think of his feelings; (2) where an unpleasant act of justice or correction has to be done; this should be done, but there is no virtue in publishing it abroad and causing humiliation to some parties or adding to their humiliation by publicity; (3) where there is a delicate question of conciliating parties to a quarrel; they may be very touchy about publicity but quite amenable to the influence of a man acting in private.

115. If anyone contends with
The Apostle even after
Guidance has been plainly
Conveyed to him, and follows
A path other than that
Becoming to men of Faith,
We shall leave him
In the path he has chosen,
And land him in Hell,—
What an evil refuge !

SECTION 18.

116. God forgiveth not
(The sin of) joining other gods⁶²⁶
With Him ; but He forgiveth
Whom He pleaseth other sins
Than this : one who joins
Other gods with God,
Hath strayed far, far away
(From the Right).
117. (The Pagans), leaving Him,
Call but upon female deities :⁶²⁷
They call but upon Satan
The persistent rebel !
118. God did curse him,
But he said : " I will take
Of Thy servants a portion ⁶²⁸
Marked off ;
119. " I will mislead them,⁶²⁹
And I will create

۱۱۵- وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَى
وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ التَّوْحِيدِ نُوَلِّهِ
مَا تَوَلَّى وَنُضْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ
وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ۝

۱۱۶- إِنْ اِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ
وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ۝

۱۱۷- إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنثًا
وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا ۝

۱۱۸- لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَا تُخَدِّعُنِي مِنْ
عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا ۝

۱۱۹- وَلَا ضَلَالَتَهُمْ وَلَا أَمْنَيْنَهُمْ

626. Cf. iv. 48 and n. 369. Blasphemy in the spiritual kingdom is like treason in the political kingdom.

627. The unity, power, and goodness of God are so manifest in nature and in the human mind when it is in accord with the universal spirit, that only the most abject perversion can account for the sin of spiritual treason. That sin arises from perverted ideas of sex or perverted ideas of self. The perversion of sex is to suppose that sex rules in spiritual matters. From it arise such horrible creations of the imagination as Kālī, the blood-thirsty goddess of India, or Hecate, the goddess of revenge and hate in Greek mythology. Even in beautiful forms like Saraswatī (the goddess of learning) or Minerva (the virgin goddess of sport and arts), to say nothing of Venus (the goddess of carnal pleasures), the emphasis laid on sex destroys a right view of spiritual nature. Perverted ideas of self are typified in the story of Satan, who was so puffed up with arrogance that he disobeyed God, and God cursed him. Both these perversions, if allowed lodgment, completely ruin our spiritual nature and deface God's handiwork. Hence it is not merely an outer sin but one that corrupts us through and through.

628. Satan obtained God's permission to tempt man, and this was implied in such free-will as was granted to man by God. Satan's boast is that the portion of mankind seduced by him will be so corrupted in their nature that they will bear a sort of brand that will mark them off as his own ; or that they will be like a portion assigned to himself.

629. Satan's deceptions are with false desires, false superstitions, and false fears.

In them false desires ; I will
Order them to slit the ears⁶³⁰
Of cattle, and to deface
The (fair) nature created⁶³¹
By God." Whoever,
Forsaking God, takes Satan
For a friend, hath
Of a surety suffered
A loss that is manifest.

120. Satan makes them promises,
And creates in them false desires ;
But Satans' promises
Are nothing but deception.

121. They (his dupes)
Will have their dwelling
In Hell, and from it
They will find no way
Of escape.

122. But those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness,—
We shall soon admit them
To Gardens, with rivers
Flowing beneath,—to dwell
Therein for ever.
God's promise is the truth,
And whose word can be
Truer than God's ?

123. Not your desires, nor those⁶³²
Of the People of the Book

وَلَا مَرْتَهُمْ فَلْيُبَيِّكُنْ أَذَانَ الْإِنْعَامِ
وَلَا مَرْتَهُمْ فَلْيَغَيِّرْ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ
وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُبِينًا ۝

۱۲۰- يَعِدُّهُمْ وَيُمْنِيهِمْ
وَمَا يَعِدُّهُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ۝

۱۲۱- أُولَئِكَ مَا وَلَّهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ
وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَخْرِصًا ۝

۱۲۲- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا
وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا ۝

۱۲۳- لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِي أَهْلِ

630. Slitting the ears of cattle is just one instance of the superstitions to which men become slaves when they run after false gods. Astrology, magic, and vain beliefs in things that do not exist lead men away from the one true God.

631. To deface the (fair) nature created by God: there is both a physical and a spiritual meaning. We see many kinds of defacements practised on men and animals, against their true nature as created by God, partly on account of superstition, partly on account of selfishness. Spiritually the case is even worse. How many natures are dwarfed or starved and turned from their original instincts by cruel superstitions or customs? God created man pure: the Evil One defaces the image.

632. Personal responsibility is again and again insisted on as the key-note of Islam. In this are implied faith and right conduct. Faith is not an external thing: it begins with an act of will, but if true and sincere, it affects the whole being, and leads to right conduct. In this it is distinguished from the kind of faith which promises salvation because some one else in whom you are asked to believe has borne away the sins of men, or the kind of faith which says that because you are born of a certain race ("Children of Abraham") or a certain caste, you are privileged, and your conduct will be judged by a different standard from that of other men. Whatever you are, if you do evil, you must suffer the consequences, unless God's Mercy comes to your help.

(Can prevail) : whoever
Works evil, will be
Required accordingly.
Nor will he find, besides God,
Any protector or helper.

الْكُتِبَ مَنْ يَعْمَلُ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ
وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا

124. If any do deeds
Of righteousness,—
Be they male or female—
And have faith,
They will enter Heaven,
And not the least injustice⁶³³
Will be done to them.

۱۲۴- وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ
مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ
وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا

125. Who can be better
In religion than one
Who submits his whole self
To God, does good,
And follows the way
Of Abraham the true in faith ?
For God did take
Abraham for a friend.⁶³⁴

۱۲۵- وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا
مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا
وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا

126. But to God belong all things
In the heavens and on earth :
And He it is that
Encompasseth all things.⁶³⁵

۱۲۶- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا

C. 67.—Justice to women and orphans
(iv. 127-152.) Is part of religion and the fear
Of God. Stand out firmly
For justice to all, even against
Yourselves or your nearest of kin.
Remain firm in faith, and consort not
With evil or hypocrisy. Be true
In speech, and wound not others :
Nor distinguish between Teachers of Truth,
For God's Truth is one and should be believed.

633. *Naqir*—the groove in a date-stone, a thing of no value whatever. Cf. n. 575 to iv. 53.

634. Abraham is distinguished in Muslim theology with the title of " Friend of God ". This does not of course mean that he was anything more than a mortal. But his faith was pure and true, and his conduct was firm and righteous in all circumstances. He was the fountain and origin of the three streams of religious thought, which were afterwards crystallised in the institutions of Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad the Chosen One.

635. *Muḥit*. Cf. iv. 108, and n. 623.

SECTION 19.

127. **¶** They ask thy instruction
Concerning the Women
Say : God doth
Instruct you about them :
And (remember) what hath
Been rehearsed unto you⁶³⁶
In the Book, concerning
The orphans of women to whom
Ye give not the portions
Prescribed, and yet whom ye
Desire to marry, as also
Concerning the children
Who are weak and oppressed :⁶³⁷
That ye stand firm
For justice to orphans.
There is not a good deed
Which ye do, but God
Is well-acquainted therewith.

١٢٧- وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ
قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ
وَمَا يَتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ
فِي يَمْنَى النِّسَاءِ الَّتِي
لَا تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ
وَتَرْغَبُونَ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ
وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الْوُلْدَانِ
وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَامَى بِالْقِسْطِ
وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا ۝

128. **¶** If a wife fears
Cruelty or desertion
On her husband's part,
There is no blame on them
If they arrange
An amicable settlement
Between themselves ;
And such settlement is best ;

١٢٨- وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ
مِنْ بَعْلِهَا شُكْرًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا
أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا
وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ۝

636. Again and again it is impressed on the community of Islam to be just in their dealings with women, orphans, children, and all whose weakness requires special consideration. The law about widows and orphans, inheritance, dower, and marriage had already been declared in iv. 2-35, and further instructions are now given on a further reference. The words translated *orphans of women* mean I think the orphaned children of widows, of whom there were several after the battle of Uhud, and whom it was the duty of the community to provide for. But some Commentators take them to mean "female orphans". In any case, because women were orphans or widows, it was not right that anyone should take advantage of their helpless position to deprive them of dower or of their portion in inheritance.

637. Cf. iv. 75, n. 592.

Both widows and orphans are to be helped because they are ordinarily weak, ill-treated, and oppressed. In communities which base their civil rights on brute strength, the weaker go to the wall, and public opinion expects nothing else. In Nietzsche's philosophy of the Superman that doctrine is stressed strongly, and some of the militarist nations in our own time seem inclined to support this reversion to our primitive instincts. Even in modern democracies of the saner sort, we are often told that it is the fate of minorities to suffer: strength of numbers here becomes the passport to power and privilege. Islam, while upholding sane manly views in general, enjoins the most solicitous care for the weak and oppressed in every way—in rights of property, in social rights, and in the right to opportunities of development. Spiritual strength or weakness does not necessarily go with physical or numerical strength.

Even though men's souls
Are swayed by greed.⁶³⁸
But if ye do good
And practise self-restraint,
God is well-acquainted
With all that ye do.

وَأَحْضَرْتُ الْأَنْفُسَ الشَّهْوَةَ
وَلِإِنْ تَحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

129. Ye are never able
To be fair and just
As between women,
Even if it is
Your ardent desire :
But turn not away
(From a woman) altogether,
So as to leave her (as it were)
Hanging (in the air).⁶³⁹
If ye come to a friendly
Understanding, and practise
Self-restraint, God is
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

۱۲۹- وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا
أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ
وَلَوْ حَرَضْتُمْ
فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمِيلِ
فَتَذَرُوهُنَّ كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ
وَلِإِنْ تَصْلَحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

130. But if they disagree
(And must part), God
Will provide abundance
For all from His
All-reaching bounty :
For God is He
That careth for all
And is Wise.

۱۳۰- وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا
يُعْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّنْ سَعَتِهِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا

131. To God belong all things
In the heavens and on earth.⁶⁴⁰

۱۳۱- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

638. To protect the woman's economic interests, various rules are prescribed for dower in marriage. But the sanctity of marriage itself is greater than any economic interests. Divorce is, of all things permitted, most hateful to God. Therefore if a breach between husband and wife can be prevented by some economic consideration, it is better to make that concession than to imperil the future of the wife, the children, and probably the husband also. Such concessions are permissible, in view of the love of wealth ingrained in unregenerate man, but a recommendation is made that we should practise self-restraint, and do what we can to come to an amicable settlement without any economic sacrifice on the part of the woman.

639. In this material world there are two principal causes of division between man and wife, money and "the other woman" or "the other man". Money was dealt with in the last verse. Here is the case of "the other woman". Legally more than one wife (up to four) are permissible on the condition that the man can be perfectly fair and just to all. But this is a condition almost impossible to fulfil. If, in the hope that he might be able to fulfil it, a man puts himself in that impossible position, it is only right to insist that he should not discard one but at least fulfil all the outward duties that are incumbent on him in respect of her.

640. Notice the refrain: "To God belong all things in the heavens and on earth"; repeated three times, each time with a new application. In the first instance it follows the statement of God's universal providence and love. If two persons, in spite of every sincere desire to love and comfort each other, fail to achieve that end, and have to separate, God's all-reaching bounty never fails, for He is the Lord of all things. In the second instance it is connected with God's Self-existence, Self-excellence, and independence of all creatures; all His commands are for our good, and they are given to all His creatures, according to their capacities. In the third instance, it is connected with his universal power; for He could destroy any individual or nation and create a new one without any loss to Himself; but He gives a chance to all again and again, and even rewards them beyond their own ambitions.

Verily We have directed
The People of the Book
Before you, and you (O Muslims)
To fear God. But if ye
Deny Him, lo ! unto God
Belong all things
In the heavens and on earth,
And God is free
Of all wants, worthy⁶⁴¹
Of all praise.

132. Yea, unto God belong
All things in the heavens
And on earth, and enough
Is God to carry through ⁶⁴²
All affairs.

133. If it were His Will,
He could destroy you,
O mankind, and create
Another race : for He
Hath power this to do.

134. If any one desires
A reward in this life,
In God's (gift) is the reward
(Both) of this life
And of the Hereafter : ⁶⁴³
For God is He that heareth
And seeth (all things).

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
وَأَيُّكُمْ أَنْ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأِنْ تَكْفُرُوا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَنِيدًا ۝

۱۳۲- وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ۝

۱۳۳- إِنْ يَشَاءْ يُدْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ
وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ قَدِيرًا ۝

۱۳۴- مَنْ كَانَ يَرْيِدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا
فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ۝

641. God's existence is absolute existence. It does not depend on any other person or any other thing. And it is worthy of all praise, for it is all-good and comprises every possible excellence. It is necessary to stress this point in order to show that the moral law for man is not a mere matter of transcendental commands, but really rests on the essential needs of mankind itself. If therefore such schools of thought as Behaviourism proved their theories up to the hilt, they do not affect the position of Islam in the least. The highest ethical standards are enjoined by Islam, not as dogmatic imperatives, but because they can be shown to follow from the needs of man's nature and the results of man's experience.

642. This refers to the next verse. He does not need us, but we need Him. Our hopes, our happiness, our success centre in Him; but He is Self-sufficient. He has the power to supersede us, but His goodness is ever seeking to give us every chance in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

643. Man in this life can only see up to the horizon of this life. The highest rewards which his wishes or ambitions can conceive of are conceived in the terms of this life. But God can give him not only these but something infinitely higher,—the rewards of the Hereafter,—which it did not even enter his heart to ask for or his imagination to conceive.

SECTION 20.

135. ② ye who believe !

Stand out firmly
 For justice, as witnesses ⁶⁴⁴
 To God, even as against
 Yourselves, or your parents,
 Or your kin, and whether
 It be (against) rich or poor : ⁶⁴⁵
 For God can best protect both.
 Follow not the lusts
 (Of your hearts), lest ye
 Swerve, and if ye
 Distort (justice) or decline
 To do justice, verily
 God is well-acquainted
 With all that ye do.

136. O ye who believe !

Believe in God
 And His Apostle,
 And the scripture which He
 Hath sent to His Apostle
 And the scripture which He sent
 To those before (him). ⁶⁴⁶
 Any who denieth God,
 His angels, His Books,
 His Apostles, and the Day
 Of Judgment, hath gone
 Far, far astray.

١٣٥-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ

بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ

وَلَوْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ

وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا

فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا

فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ

أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا

وَلِنْ تَلُوا أَوْ تَعْرِضُوا

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ۝

١٣٦-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ

وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ

وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ

وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ

وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ۝

644. Justice is God's attribute, and to stand firm for justice is to be a witness to God, even if it is detrimental to our own interests (as we conceive them) or the interests of those who are near and dear to us. According to the Latin saying, "Let justice be done though heaven should fall."

But Islamic justice is something higher than the formal justice of Roman Law or any other human Law. It is even more penetrative than the subtler justice in the speculations of the Greek philosophers. It searches out the innermost motives, because we are to act as in the presence of God, to whom all things, acts, and motives are known.

645. Some people may be inclined to favour the rich, because they expect something from them. Some people may be inclined to favour the poor because they are generally helpless. Partiality in either case is wrong. Be just, without fear or favour. Both the rich and the poor are under God's protection as far as their legitimate interests are concerned, but they cannot expect to be favoured at the expense of others. And He can protect their interests far better than any man.

646. If your belief is by habit or birth or the example of those you love or respect or admire, make that belief more specific and personal to yourself. We must not only have faith, but realise that faith in our inmost being. The chief objects of our Faith are God, His Apostle, and His Revelations. To all these we must give a home in our hearts. The angels we do not see and realise as we realise God, who is nearer to us than the vehicle of our life-blood, and the Day of Judgment is for our future experience, but we must not deny them, or we cut off a part of our spiritual view.

137. Those who believe,
Then reject Faith,
Then believe (again)
And (again) reject Faith,
And go on increasing
In Unbelief,—God
Will not forgive them
Nor guide them on the Way.⁶⁴⁷

138. To the Hypocrites give
The glad tidings that
There is for them
(But) a grievous Penalty ;—

139. Yea, to those who take
For friends Unbelievers
Rather than Believers :
Is it honour they seek
Among them ? Nay,—
All honour is with God.⁶⁴⁸

140. Already has He sent you ⁶⁴⁹
Word in the Book, that when
Ye hear the Signs of God
Held in defiance and ridicule,
Ye are not to sit with them
Unless they turn to a different
Theme : if ye did, ye would be
Like them. For God will
Collect the Hypocrites and those
Who defy Faith—all in Hell ;—

۱۳۷- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا
ثُمَّ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا
ثُمَّ اِزْدَادُوا كُفْرًا
لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ
وَلَا يَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًا ۝

۱۳۸- بَشِّرِ السَّافِقِينَ
بَأَن لَّهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۝

۱۳۹- الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ
مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
اِيْتَنَعُونَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ
فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ۝

۱۴۰- وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَن إِذَا
سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتَ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيَسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا
فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ
حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ
إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا أَقْبَلْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ السَّافِقِينَ
وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ۝

647. Those who go on changing sides again and again can have no real Faith at any time. Their motives are mere worldly double-dealing. How can they expect God's grace or forgiveness?

Here is a clear warning against those who make their religion a mere matter of worldly convenience. True religion goes far deeper. It transforms the very nature of man. After that transformation it is as impossible for him to change as it is for light to become darkness.

648. If the motive is some advantage, some honour,—the fountain of all good is God. How can it really be expected from those who deny Faith? And if there is some show of worldly honour, what is it worth against the contempt they earn in the spiritual world?

649. Cf. vi. 68, an earlier and Meccan verse.

Where we see or hear Truth held in light esteem, we ought to make our protest and withdraw from such company, not out of arrogance, as if we thought ourselves superior to other people, but out of real humility, lest our own nature be corrupted in such society. But it is possible that our protest or our sincere remonstrance may change the theme of discourse. In that case we have done good to those who were inclined to hold Truth in light esteem, for we have saved them for ridiculing Truth.

141. (These are) the ones who
Wait and watch about you :
If ye do gain
A victory from God,
They say : " Were we not
With you ?"—but if
The Unbelievers gain
A success, they say
(To them) : " Did we not
Gain an advantage over you,
And did we not guard
You from the Believers ?"
But God will judge
Betwixt you on the Day
Of Judgment. And never
Will God grant
To the Unbelievers
A way (to triumph)
Over the Believers.⁶⁵⁰

SECTION 21.

142. **The** Hypocrites—they think
They are over-reaching God,
But He will over-reach them :
When they stand up to prayer,
They stand without earnestness,
To be seen of men,
But little do they hold
God in remembrance ;

143. (They are) distracted in mind
Even in the midst of it,—
Being (sincerely) for neither
One group nor for another.
Whom God leaves straying,—
Never wilt thou find

١٤١- الَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ
فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَّعَكُمْ
وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ
قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَنَمْنَعَكُم مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
وَلَكِنْ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ
لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا

١٤٢- إِنَّ السُّفْهَانَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ
وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ
وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالًا
يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ
وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
١٤٣- مُدْبِدِينَ بَيْنَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ
لَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ وَلَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ
وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ

650. The methods and motives of Hypocrisy are thoroughly unmasked here. It has no principles, but watches for an opportunity to turn any event to its own advantage. If battle is joined between two inconsistent principles, it has no belief in either but watches the result. There is unceasing fight between Good and Evil in this world. If the Good seems to win, the hypocrites range themselves on its side with unctuous words, taking a great part of the credit to themselves. Perhaps the balance tips the other way later, and they have to make their peace with Evil. " Oh ! " they say airily, " we were in the ranks of your enemy before, on purpose to protect you when they were too strong for you ! " This may suit the ways of the world. But the day of their account will come eventually. For the Good must ultimately triumph.

For him the Way.⁶⁵¹

144. O ye who believe !

Take not for friends
Unbelievers rather than
Believers : do ye wish
To offer God an open
Proof against yourselves ?

145. The Hypocrites will be

In the lowest depths
Of the Fire : no helper
Wilt thou find for them ;—

146. Except for those who repent,

Mend (their life), hold fast
To God, and purify their religion
As in God's sight : if so
They will be (numbered)⁶⁵²
With the Believers.
And soon will God
Grant to the Believers
A reward of immense value.

147. What can God gain

By your punishment,
If ye are grateful
And ye believe ?
Nay, it is God
That recogniseth ⁶⁵³

5 (All good), and knoweth

30 All things.

لَهُ سَبِيلًا ۝

۱۴۴-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ
أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَتُرِيدُونَ
أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ۝

۱۴۵-إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ
مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ۝

۱۴۶-إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا
وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَاخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِي
اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

۱۴۷-مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ
إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَآمَنْتُمْ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا ۝

651. If we choose evil deliberately and double our guilt by fraud and deception, we do not deceive God, but we deceive ourselves. We deprive ourselves of the Grace of God, and are left straying away from the Path. In that condition who can guide us or show us the Way? Our true and right instincts become blunted; our fraud makes us unstable in character; when our fellow-men find out our fraud, any advantages we may have gained by the fraud are lost; and we become truly distracted in mind.

652. Even Hypocrites can obtain forgiveness, on four conditions: (1) sincere repentance, which purifies their mind; (2) amendment of their conduct, which purifies their outer life; (3) steadfastness and devotion to God, which strengthens their faith and protects them from the assaults of evil; and (4) sincerity in their religion, or their whole inner being, which brings them as full members into the goodly Fellowship of Faith.

653. There is no pleasure nor advantage to God in punishing His own creatures, over whom He watches with loving care. On the contrary He recognises any good—however little—which He finds in us, and delights to give us a reward beyond all measure. His recognition of us is compared by a bold metaphor to our gratitude to Him for His favours. The epithet *Shākir* is applied to God, as here, in ii. 158, and other passages. In xvi. 121 it is applied to Abraham: "he showed his gratitude for the favours of God, who chose him and guided him to a Straight Way."

148. God loveth not that evil
Should be noised abroad ⁶⁵⁴
In public speech, except
Where injustice hath been
Done; for God
Is He who heareth
And knoweth all things.

149. Whether ye publish
A good deed or conceal it
Or cover evil with pardon,
Verily God doth blot out
(Sins) and hath power
(In the judgment of values). ⁶⁵⁵

150. Those who deny God
And His apostles, and (those
Who) wish to separate
God from His apostles,
Saying: "We believe in some
But reject others":
And (those who) wish
To take a course midway, — ⁶⁵⁶

151. They are in truth
(Equally) Unbelievers;

١٤٨- لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ

الْقَوْلِ

إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلِمَ

وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا ۝

١٤٩- إِنْ تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ

أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفْوًا قَدِيرًا ۝

١٥٠- إِنْ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ

وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ

وَيَقُولُونَ نُوْهُ مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ

وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُتَّخَذَ وَابِعَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ۝

١٥١- أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا ۝

654. We can make a public scandal of evil in many ways. (1) It may be idle sensation mongering: it often leads to more evil by imitation, as where criminal deeds are glorified in a cinema, or talked about shamelessly in a novel or drama. (2) It may be malicious gossip of a foolish, personal kind: it does no good, but it hurts people's feelings. (3) It may be malevolent slander or libel: it is intended deliberately to cause harm to people's reputation or injure them in other ways, and is rightly punishable under all laws. (4) It may be a public rebuke or correction or remonstrance, without malice. (1), (2), and (3) are absolutely forbidden. (4) may be by a person in authority; in which case the exception applies, for all wrong or injustice must be corrected openly, to prevent its recurrence. Or (4) may be by a person not vested with authority, but acting either from motives of public spirit, or in order to help someone who has been wronged; here again the exception will apply. But if the motive is different, the exception does not apply. (4) would also include a public complaint by a person who has suffered a wrong; he has every right to seek public redress.

655. *Qadir*: I have translated it more fully than most translators. The root *qadara* not only implies power, ability, strength, but two other ideas which it is difficult to convey in a single word, viz., the act and power of estimating the true value of a thing or persons, as in vi. 91; and the act and power of regulating something so as to bring it into correspondence with something. "Judgment of values" I think sums up these finer shades of meaning. God forgives what is wrong and is able fully to appreciate and judge of the value of our good deeds whether we publish them or conceal them.

656. Unbelief takes various forms. Three are mentioned here: (1) denial of God and His revelation to mankind through inspired men; (2) a sort of nominal belief in God and His apostles, but one which is partial, and mixed up with racial pride, which does not allow of the recognition of any apostles beyond those of a particular race; and (3) a nominal belief in universal revelation, but so hedged round with peculiar doctrines of exclusive salvation, that it practically approaches to a denial of God's universal love for all mankind and all Creation. All three amount to Unbelief, for they really deny God's universal love and care.

And We have prepared
For Unbelievers a humiliating
Punishment.

وَاعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ۝

152. To those who believe
In God and His apostles
And make no distinction
Between any of the apostles,
We shall soon give
Their (due) rewards :
For God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

۱۵۲- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ
أُولَئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرُهُمْ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝

C. 68.—The People of the Book went wrong :
(iv. 153-176.) The Jews in breaking their Covenant,
And slandering Mary and Jesus,
And in their usury and injustice ;
And the Christians in raising
Jesus the Apostle to equality
With God. God's revelation
Is continued in the Qur-ān,
Which comes with manifest proof
And a clear light to those who understand.

SECTION 22.

153. The People of the Book
Ask thee to cause
A book to descend to them
From heaven : indeed
They asked Moses
For an even greater
(Miracle), for they said :
" Show us God in public," ⁶⁵⁷
But they were dazed
For their presumption,
With thunder and lightning.
Yet they worshipped the calf
Even after Clear Signs
Had come to them ;
Even so We forgave them ;
And gave Moses manifest
Proofs of authority.

۱۵۳- يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تَنزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ
كِتَابًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَى أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ
فَقَالُوا ارْزُقْنَا اللَّهُ جَهَنَّمَ
فَأَخَذَتْهُمْ الضُّعْفَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ
ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ
الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ
وَآتَيْنَا مُوسَى سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ۝

657. Cf. ii. 55, for the thunder and lightning which dazed those who were presumptuous enough to ask that they should see God face to face, and ii. 51 and n. 66, for the worship of the golden calf.

The lesson is that it is presumptuous on the part of man to judge of spiritual things in terms of material things, or to ask to see God with their material eyes when God is above material forms and is independent of time and space.

154. And for their Covenant
We raised over them
(The towering height)
Of Mount (Sinai); ⁶⁵⁸
And (on another occasion)
We said : " Enter the gate
With humility "; and (once again)
We commanded them :
" Transgress not in the matter
Of the Sabbath."
And We took from them
A solemn Covenant.

١٥٢- وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ
بَيْنَاقِهِمْ
وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ
سُجَّدًا
وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ
وَآخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا ٥

155. (They have incurred divine ⁶⁵⁹
Displeasure) : in that they
Broke their Covenant ;
That they rejected the Signs
Of God ; that they slew
The Messengers in defiance ⁶⁶⁰
Of right ; that they said,
" Our hearts are the wrappings ⁶⁶¹
(Which preserve God's Word ;
We need no more) " ;—nay,
God hath set the seal on their hearts
For their blasphemy,
And little is it they believe ;—

١٥٥- فِيمَا نَقُصُّهُمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ
وَكُفِّرَهُمْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَقَتْلِهِمُ الرُّسُلَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ
وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ
بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ
فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ٥

156. That they rejected Faith ;
That they uttered against Mary

١٥٦- وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ

658. In this verse there is a recapitulation of three salient incidents of Jewish refractoriness already referred to in the second Sūra : viz., (1) the Covenant under the towering height of Sinai, ii. 63 ; (2) their arrogance where they were commanded humility in entering a town, ii. 58 ; and (3) their transgression of the Sabbath, ii. 65.

659. In verses 155, 156, 157, 160 (latter half), and 161 with parenthetical clauses including those in verses 158-159, and 160 (first half), there is a catalogue of the iniquities of which the Jews were guilty, and for these iniquities we must understand some such words as : " They are under divine displeasure." Each clause of the indictment I have indicated by prefixing the word " that."

660. Cf. iii. 21, and nn. 363 and 364.

661. Cf. ii. 88, and n. 92, where the full meaning is explained.

Note the crescendo (heightening effect) in the argument. Their iniquities were : (1) that they broke their Covenant ; (2) that they rejected God's guidance as conveyed in His Signs ; that they killed God's Messengers and incurred a double guilt, viz., that of murder and that of a deliberate defiance of God's law ; and (4) that they imagined themselves arrogantly self-sufficient, which means a blasphemous closing of their hearts for ever against the admission of God's grace. Then begins another series of iniquities from a different point of view : (1) that they rejected Faith ; (2) that they made false charges against a saintly woman like Mary, who was chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus ; (3) that they boasted of having killed Jesus when they were victims of their own self-hallucination ; (4) that they hindered people from God's way ; and (5) that by means of usury and fraud they oppressed their fellow-men.

A grave false charge ;⁶⁶²

157. That they said (in boast),
 " We killed Christ Jesus
 The son of Mary,
 The Apostle of God " ;—
 But they killed him not,
 Nor crucified him,⁶⁶³
 But so it was made
 To appear to them,
 And those who differ
 Therein are full of doubts,
 With no (certain) knowledge,
 But only conjecture to follow,
 For of a surety
 They killed him not ;—

158. Nay, God raised him up⁶⁶⁴
 Unto Himself ; and God
 Is Exalted in Power, Wise ;—

159. And there is none
 Of the People of the Book

بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا ۝

١٥٧- وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى
 ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
 وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ
 وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ
 لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ
 إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ
 وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ۝

١٥٨- بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ
 وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ۝

١٥٩- وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ

662. The false charge against Mary was that she was unchaste. Cf. xix. 27-28. Such a charge is bad enough to make against any woman, but to make it against Mary, the mother of Jesus, was to bring into ridicule God's power itself. Islam is specially strong in guarding the reputation of women. Slanderers of women are bound to bring four witnesses in support of their accusations, and if they fail to produce four witnesses, they are to be flogged with eighty stripes and debarred for ever from being competent witnesses : xxiv. 4.

663. The end of the life of Jesus on earth is as much involved in mystery as his birth, and indeed the greater part of his private life, except the three main years of his ministry. It is not profitable to discuss the many doubts and conjectures among the early Christian sects among Muslim theologians. The Orthodox Christian Churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that his life was taken on the Cross, that he died and was buried, that on the third day he rose in the body with his wounds intact, and walked about and conversed, and ate with his disciples, and was afterwards taken up bodily to heaven. This is necessary for the theological doctrine of blood sacrifice and vicarious atonement for sins, which is rejected by Islam. But some of the early Christian sects did not believe that Christ was killed on the Cross. The Basilidans believed that someone else was substituted for him. The Docetæ held that Christ never had a real physical or natural body, but only an apparent or phantom body, and that his Crucifixion was only apparent, not real. The Marcionite Gospel (about A.D. 138) denied that Jesus was born, and merely said that he appeared in human form. The Gospel of St. Barnabas supported the theory of substitution on the Cross. The Quranic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews, notwithstanding certain circumstances which produced that illusion in the minds of some of his enemies ; that disputations, doubts, and conjectures on such matters are vain ; and that he was taken up to God (see next verse and note).

664. There is difference of opinion as to the exact interpretation of this verse. The words are : The Jews did not kill Jesus, but God raised him up (*rafa'a*) to Himself. One school holds that Jesus did not die the usual human death, but still lives in the body in heaven ; another holds that he did die (v. 120) but not when he was supposed to be crucified, and that his being " raised up " unto God means that instead of being disgraced as a malefactor, as the Jews intended, he was on the contrary honoured by God as His Apostle : see also next verse. The same word *rafa'a* is used in association with honour in connection with Muṣṭafā in xciv. 4.

SECTION 23.

163. **W**e have sent thee
Inspiration, as We sent it
To Noah and the Messengers ⁶⁶⁸
After him : We sent
Inspiration to Abraham, ⁶⁶⁹
Ismā'il, Isaac, Jacob
And the Tribes, to Jesus,
Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon,
And to David We gave
The Psalms.

164. Of some apostles We have
Already told thee the story ;
Of others We have not ;—
And to Moses God spoke
direct ;— ⁶⁷⁰

165. Apostles who gave good news ⁶⁷¹
As well as warning,
That mankind, after (the coming)
Of the apostles, should have
No plea against God :
For God is Exalted in Power,
Wise.

166. **B**ut God beareth witness
That what He hath sent
Unto thee He hath sent
From His (own) knowledge, ⁶⁷²

١٦٣- إِنْكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ
كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالْتِيمِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ
وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ وَ
يُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا

١٦٤- وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ
قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ
وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا

١٦٥- رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لَعَلَّ
يَكُونُ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ
بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

١٦٦- لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ
أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ

668. First we have a general statement : that inspiration was sent to many Messengers, and the inspiration was of the same kind as that sent to the Apostle Muhammad, for God's Message is one. Note that what is spoken of here is Inspiration, not necessarily a Book. Every nation or group of people had an apostle : x. 47. Some of these apostles have been mentioned by name in the Qur'an, and some not : iv. 164.

669. Cf. ii. 136 and iii. 84. The list here given is in three groups. (1) The first group, Abraham's family, is the same as in ii. 136 (where see the note) and in iii. 84. (2) Then we have the tragic figures of Jesus, Job and Jonah, whose mission was from a worldly point of view unsuccessful. (3) Then we have Aaron the priest and Solomon the King, both great figures, but each subordinate to another primary figure, viz. Moses (mentioned in the next verse) and David (mentioned at the end of this verse). David's distinction was the Psalms, which are still extant. Though their present form may possibly be different from the original, and they do undoubtedly include Psalms not written by David, the collection contains much devotional poetry of a high order.

670. God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai through a cloud : Exod. xxxiv. 5. Hence the title of Moses in Muslim theology : *Kalim-ullah* : the one to whom God spoke.

671. Every apostle proclaims God's goodness to the righteous and forgiveness to those who repent, (good news), and the Wrath to come for those who reject Faith and live in iniquity (warning). Their mission of warning is a prelude and complement to their mission of good news. No one can then say that he or she did not know.

672. Inspiration, though it is clothed in human language, and shaped to the personality of the inspired one, proceeds from the knowledge of God, and therefore often contains more meaning than the inspired one himself realises.

And the angels bear witness :
But enough is God for a witness.

167. Those who reject Faith
And keep off (men)
From the Way of God,
Have verily strayed far,
Far away from the Path.

168. Those who reject Faith
And do wrong,—God
Will not forgive them
Nor guide them
To any way—

169. Except the way of Hell,
To dwell therein for ever.
And this to God is easy.⁶⁷³

170. O mankind ! the Apostle
Hath come to you in truth
From God : believe in him :
It is best for you.⁶⁷⁴ But if
Ye reject Faith, to God
Belong all things in the heavens
And on earth : and God
Is All-knowing, All-wise.

171. O People of the Book !
Commit no excesses⁶⁷⁵
In your religion : nor say
Of God aught but the truth.

وَكُفَى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِيدًا ۝

۱۶۷- اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ

سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ

قَدْ ضَلُّوا ضَلٰلًا بَعِيْدًا ۝

۱۶۸- اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَظَلَمُوْا

لَمْ يَكُنِ اللّٰهُ لِيَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ

وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيْقًا ۝

۱۶۹- اِلَّا طَرِيْقَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا اَبَدًا

وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرًا ۝

۱۷۰- يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُوْلُ

بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ فَامِنُوْا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ وَاِنْ

تَكْفُرُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ

وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ۝

۱۷۱- يٰۤاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لَا تَغْلُوْا فِى دِيْنِكُمْ

وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا عَلَى اللّٰهِ اِلَّا الْحَقُّ ۝

673. *Easy*—not in the sense that God takes any pleasure in any of His creatures going astray. The contrary is the case : for God's Grace recognises all good in us to such an extent that it is compared to gratitude in iv. 147; see n. 653. We must understand *easy* in the sense that God is Supreme in knowledge and power; if any forces of rebellion foolishly think that they can evade punishment, they are mistaken. Punishment comes as a matter of course. It is not a matter of difficulty or exertion on the part of God.

674. God's solicitude for us is for our own good, not because He gets any advantage from it. For He is independent of all things, and everything declares His glory and praise.

675. Just as a foolish servant may go wrong by excess of zeal for his master, so in religion people's excesses may lead them to blasphemy or a spirit the very opposite of religion. The Jewish excesses in the direction of formalism, racialism, exclusiveness, and rejection of Christ Jesus have been denounced in many places. Here the Christian attitude is condemned, which raises Jesus to an equality with God; in some cases venerates Mary almost to idolatry; attributes a physical son to God; and invents the doctrine of the Trinity, opposed to all reason, which according to the Athanasian Creed, unless a man believes, he is doomed to hell for ever. Let our Muslims also beware lest they fall into excesses either in doctrine or in formalism.

Christ Jesus the son of Mary
Was (no more than)
An apostle of God,
And His Word,
Which He bestowed on Mary,
And a Spirit proceeding
From Him : so believe
In God and His apostles.
Say not "Trinity" : desist : ⁶⁷⁶
It will be better for you :
For God is One God :
Glory be to Him :
(Far Exalted is He) above
Having a son. To Him
Belong all things in the heavens;
And on earth. And enough
Is God as a Disposer of affairs.

SECTION 24.

172. Christ disdaineth not
To serve and worship God, ⁶⁷⁷
Nor do the angels, those
Nearest (to God) :
Those who disdain
His worship and are arrogant,—
He will gather them all
Together unto Himself ⁶⁷⁸
To (answer).

173. But to those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness,
He will give their (due)
Rewards,—and more,
Out of His bounty :
But those who are
Disdainful and arrogant,
He will punish

إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عَيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ
الْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ
فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةٌ ۚ
إِنَّمَا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ
سُبْحَنَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ
لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ۚ

١٤٢- لَنْ يَسْتَنكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ
أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِلَّهِ
وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ
وَمَنْ يَسْتَنكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ
فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمُ إِلَهِ جَمِيعًا ۝
١٤٣- فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
فَيُؤْتُونَهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ
وَيَزِيدُهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا

676. Christ's attributes are mentioned : (1) that he was the son of a woman, Mary, and therefore a man; (2) but an apostle, a man with a mission from God, and therefore entitled to honour; (3) a Word bestowed on Mary, for he was created by God's word "Be" (*kun*), and he was; iii. 59; (4) a spirit proceeding from God, but not God : his life and his mission were more limited than in the case of some other apostles, though we must pay equal honour to him as a man of God. The doctrines of Trinity, equality with God, and sonship, are repudiated as blasphemies. God is independent of all needs and has no need of a son to manage His affairs. The Gospel of John (whoever wrote it) has put in a great deal of Alexandrian and Gnostic mysticism round the doctrine of the Word (Greek, Logos), but it is simply explained here, and our Sâfis work on this explanation.

677. Christ often watched and prayed, as a humble worshipper of God; and his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane was full of human dignity, suffering, and self-humiliation (see Matt. xxvi. 36-45)

678. The disdainful and the arrogant are the crew of Satan, who will be gathered together before the Supreme Throne for punishment.

With a grievous penalty ;
Nor will they find,
Besides God, any
To protect or help them.

174. O mankind ! Verily
There hath come to you
A convincing proof
From your Lord :
For We have sent unto you
A light (that is) manifest.⁶⁷⁹

175. Then those who believe
In God, and hold fast
To Him,—soon will He
Admit them to Mercy
And Grace from Him,⁶⁸⁰
And guide them to Himself
By a straight Way.

176. They ask thee
For a legal decision.
Say : God directs (thus)
About those who leave
No descendants or ascendants
As heirs. If it is a man⁶⁸¹
That dies, leaving a sister
But no child, she shall

فَيَعِزُّ بِهِمْ عَدَايَا الْيَمَانَةِ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ
لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ۝

۱۷۴- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَإِنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا ۝

۱۷۵- فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ
فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ
وَيَهْدِي لَهُمُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ۝

۱۷۶- يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ
قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ
إِن مَّرُوءًا هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ
وَلَهُ أُخْتُ فَلَهَا

679. The Proof and the Light are the Qur-ān and the Personality, Life, and Teaching of Muḥammad Muṣṭafā.

680. *From Himself*—From His Presence : see iii, 195 and n. 501. The Mercy and Grace are expressed here as specially flowing from Him.

681. This verse supplements the rule of inheritance to the estate of a deceased person who has left as heir neither a descendant nor an ascendant. We shall call such a person A, who may be either a male or a female. In iv, 12 (second half), A's case was considered where he had left uterine brothers or sisters. Here A's case is considered where he has left brothers and/or sisters by the father's side, whether the mother was the same or not. "Brothers" and "sisters" in this verse must be construed to be such brothers and sisters.

For the sake of clearness I have expanded the terse language of the original in the translation. Let me explain it more concretely in this note. A, and "brother" and "sister" being strictly defined as above, we proceed to consider how A's inheritance would be divided. If A left a widow or widower, the widow's or widower's share would first be calculated as in the first half of iv, 12 ; if A left no spouse, this calculation would not be necessary. Then if A left a single "sister" she would have a half share, the remaining half (in so far as it, or a part of it, does not fall to a spouse, if any) going to remoter heirs ; if a single "brother," he would have the whole (subject to the spouse's right if there is a spouse) ; if more than one "brother," they divide the whole (subject to, etc.). If A left two or more "sisters," they get between them two-thirds, subject to the spouse's right, if any. If A left a "brother" and "sister," or "brothers" and "sisters," they divide on the basis that each "brother's" share is twice that of the "sister" (subject to, etc.). In all cases debts, funeral expenses and legacies (to the amount allowed) have priority as in n. 522.

Have half the inheritance :
 If (such a deceased was)
 A woman, who left no child,
 Her brother takes her inheritance :
 If there are two sisters,
 They shall have two-thirds
 Of the inheritance
 (Between them) : if there are
 Brothers and sisters, (they share),
 The male having twice
 The share of the female.
 Thus doth God make clear
 To you (His law), lest
 Ye err. And God
 Hath knowledge of all things.

نُصِفَ مَا تَرَكَ
 وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا
 إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهَا وَلَدٌ
 فَإِنْ كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ
 فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً
 رِجَالًا وَنِسَاءً فَلِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حِظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ
 يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَضِلُّوا
 وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

ع



INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA V (*Māida*).

This Sūra deals, by way of recapitulation, with the backsliding of the Jews and Christians from their pure religions, to which the coping stone was placed by Islam. It refers particularly to the Christians, and to their solemn Sacrament of the Last Supper, to whose mystic meaning they are declared to have been false.

As a logical corollary to the corruption of the earlier religions of God, the practical precepts of Islam, about food, cleanliness, justice, and fidelity are recapitulated.

The fourth verse contains the memorable declaration : " This day have I perfected your religion for you " : which was promulgated in 10 H., during the Apostle's last Pilgrimage to Mecca. Chronologically it was the last verse to be revealed.

Summary.—Beginning with an appeal to fulfil, as sacred, all obligations, human and divine, it points to certain regulations about food, as conducive to a sober and social life, without superstition and without bias or hatred (v. 1-6, and C. 69).

Cleanliness of body, and justice and uprightness of dealing are nearest to Piety (v. 7-12, and C. 70).

If the Jews and the Christians turned back from the Truth and violated their Covenants, they have had their warning (v. 13-29, and C. 71).

The murder of Abel by Cain is the type of the treatment which the just man suffers from the envious. There is punishment from God. The just man must not grieve (v. 30-46, and C. 72).

Muslims must do impartial justice, but must protect their own Brotherhood and their Faith from insult and scorn : they must appreciate piety, humility, and other good points among the Christians (v. 47-89, and C. 73).



They must enjoy with gratitude all that is good and lawful, but guard themselves against excess. Swearing, intoxication, gambling, violation of the Sanctuary, superstitions of all kinds, and false evidence are condemned (v. 90-111, and C. 74).

The miracles of Jesus, and how they were misused by those who bore his name (v. 112-123, and C. 75).

C. 69.—All obligations are sacred, human
(v. 1-6.) Or divine. In the spiritual world
We owe duties to God, which must
Be fulfilled. But whilst we are
In this world of sense, those duties.
Are by no means isolated
From what we owe to ourselves
And our fellows in the world
Of men. We must respect the laws
And customs of the Sacred Mosque
And the Sacred Sanctuary.
In food our laws are simple :
All things good and pure are lawful.
We refuse not social intercourse
With men and women,—
People of the Book.

Sūra V.

Māida, or The Table Spread.*In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.*

1.  ye who believe !
Fulfil (all) obligations.⁶⁸²
2.  Lawful unto you (for food)
Are all four-footed animals,
With the exceptions named : ⁶⁸³
But animals of the chase
Are forbidden while ye
Are in the Sacred Precincts
Or in pilgrim garb : ⁶⁸⁴
For God doth command
According to His Will and Plan.⁶⁸⁵
3. O ye who believe !
Violate not the sanctity



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ ۖ

أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ الْأَنْعَامِ
إِلَّا مَا يَمِثُّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ
وَأَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ۖ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا

682. This line has been justly admired for its terseness and comprehensiveness. Obligations : 'uqūd : the Arabic word implies so many things that a whole chapter of Commentary can be written on it. First, there are the divine obligations that arise from our spiritual nature and our relation to God. He created us and implanted in us the faculty of knowledge and foresight ; besides the intuition and reason which He gave us, He made Nature responsive to our needs and His Signs in Nature are so many lessons to us in our own inner life ; He further sent Messengers and Teachers, for the guidance of our conduct in individual, social, and public life. All these gifts create corresponding obligations which we must fulfil. But in our own human and material life we undertake mutual obligations, express and implied. We make a promise ; we enter into a commercial or social contract ; we enter into a contract of marriage : we must faithfully fulfil all obligations in all these relationships. Our group or our State enters into a treaty : every individual in that group or State is bound to see that as far as lies in his power, such obligations are faithfully discharged. There are tacit obligations : living in civil society, we must respect its tacit conventions unless they are morally wrong, and in that case we must get out of such society. There are tacit obligations in the characters of host and guest, wayfarer or companions, employer or employed, etc. etc., which every man of Faith must discharge conscientiously. The man who deserts those who need him and goes to pray in a desert is a coward who disregards his obligations. All these obligations are inter-connected. Truth and fidelity are parts of religion in all relations of life.

This verse is numbered separately from the succeeding verses by Ḥāfiẓ 'Uthmān and the Faṭḥ-ur-Raḥmān. As it forms a paragraph or chapter by itself, I have followed that numbering throughout this Sūra, thus reluctantly diverging from the numbering in the edition of the *Anjuman-i-Ḥimāyat-i-Islām* throughout this chapter.

683. See v. 4 below.

684. Cf. v. 97-99. Hunting and the use of game are forbidden " while ye are *ḥurumun*," i.e., while ye are (1) in the Sacred Precincts, or (2) in the special pilgrim garb (*iḥrām*), as to which see n. 212, ii, 196. In most cases the two amount to the same thing. The Sacred Precincts are sanctuary both for man and beast.

685. God's commands are not arbitrary. His Will is the perfect Archetype or Plan of the world. Everything He wills has regard to His Plan, in which are reflected His perfect wisdom and goodness.

Of the Symbols of God,⁶⁸⁶
 Nor of the Sacred Month,⁶⁸⁷
 Nor of the animals brought
 For sacrifice, nor the garlands
 That mark out such animals,
 Nor the people resorting
 To the Sacred House,⁶⁸⁸
 Seeking of the bounty
 And good pleasure
 Of their Lord.
 But when ye are clear
 Of the Sacred Precincts⁶⁸⁹
 And of pilgrim garb,
 Ye may hunt.
 And let not the hatred
 Of some people
 In (once) shutting you out
 Of the Sacred Mosque
 Lead you to transgression
 (And hostility on your part).⁶⁹⁰
 Help ye one another
 In righteousness and piety,
 But help ye not one another
 In sin and rancour:
 Fear God: for God
 Is strict in punishment.

شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ
 وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَاعِدَ
 وَلَا آيَاتِ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ
 يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا
 وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا
 وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ
 أَن صَدَلْتُمْ
 عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
 أَن تَعْتَدُوا
 وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ
 وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
 وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

4. Forbidden to you (for food)
 Are : dead meat, blood,

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ

686. Cf. ii. 158, where Ṣafā and Marwa are called "Symbols (*sha'ā'ir*) of God". Here the Symbols are everything connected with the Pilgrimage, viz., (1) the places (like Ṣafā and Marwa, or the Ka'ba or 'Arafāt, etc.); (2) the rites and ceremonies prescribed; (3) prohibitions (such as that of hunting, etc.); (4) the times and seasons prescribed. There is spiritual and moral symbolism in all these. See notes on ii. 158, ii. 194-200.

687. The month of pilgrimage, or else, collectively, the four sacred months (ix. 36), viz., Rajab (7th), Zul-qa'd (11th), Zul-ḥajj (12th, the month of Pilgrimage), and Muḥarram (the first of the year). In all these months War was prohibited. Excepting Rajab the other three months are consecutive.

688. The immunity from attack or interference extended to the animals brought as offerings for sacrifice and the garlands or fillets or distinguishing marks which gave them immunity. They were treated as sacred symbols. And of course every protection or immunity was enjoyed by the Pilgrims.

689. This is the state opposite to that described in n. 684, i.e., when ye have left the Sacred Precincts, and have doffed the special pilgrim garb, showing your return to ordinary life.

690. See n. 205 to ii. 191. In the sixth year of the Hijra the Pagans, by way of hatred and persecution of the Muslims, had prevented them from access to the Sacred Mosque. When the Muslims were re-established in Mecca, some of them wanted to retaliate and exclude the Pagans or in some way to interfere with them in the Pilgrimage. This is condemned. Passing from the immediate event to the general principle, we must not retaliate or return evil for evil. The hatred of the wicked does not justify hostility on our part. We have to help each other in righteousness and piety, not in perpetuating feuds of hatred and enmity. We may have to fight and put down evil, but never in a spirit of malice or hatred, but always in a spirit of justice and righteousness.

The flesh of swine, and that
On which hath been invoked
The name of other than God ; ⁶⁹¹
That which hath been
Killed by strangling,
Or by a violent blow,
Or by a headlong fall,
Or by being gored to death ;
That which hath been (partly)
Eaten by a wild animal ;
Unless ye are able
To slaughter it (in due form) ; ⁶⁹²
That which is sacrificed ⁶⁹³
On stone (altars) ;
(Forbidden) also is the division ⁶⁹⁴
(Of meat) by raffling
With arrows : that is impiety.

¶ This day have those who
Reject Faith given up
All hope of your religion : ⁶⁹⁵
Yet fear them not
But fear me.
This day have I
Perfected your religion ⁶⁹⁶
For you, completed
My favour upon you,
And have chosen for you
Islam as your religion.

But if any is forced
By hunger, with no inclination
To transgression, God is
Indeed Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ
وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ
وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ
وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ
وَالنَّطِيحَةُ
وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ إِلَّا مَا ذُكِّرْتُمْ
وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى التُّصْبِ
وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلامِ
ذَلِكَ فِسْقٌ
الْيَوْمَ يَكُنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ
فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ
الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ
وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي
وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا
فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْصَصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ
لِإِسْلَامِهِ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

691. Cf. ii. 173 and nn. 173 and 174. The prohibition of dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which other name than that of God has been invoked, has been there explained.

692. If an animal dies by strangling, or by a violent blow, or a headlong fall, or by being gored to death, or by being attacked by a wild animal, the presumption is that it becomes carrion, as the life-blood is congealed before being taken out of the body. But the presumption can be rebutted. If the life-blood still flows and the solemn mode of slaughter (*zabḥ*) in the name of God as a sacrifice is carried out, it becomes lawful as food.

693. This was also an idolatrous rite, different from that in which a sacrifice was devoted to a particular idol or a false god.

694. Gambling of all kinds is forbidden : ii. 291. A sort of lottery or raffle practised by Pagan Arabs has been described in n. 241. Division of meat in this way is here forbidden, as it is a form of gambling.

695. So long as Islam was not organised, with its own community and its own laws, the Unbelievers had hoped to wean the Believers from the new Teaching. Now that hope was gone, with the complete organisation of Islam.

696. The last verse revealed chronologically, marking the approaching end of Muṣṭafā's ministry in his earthly life.

5. They ask thee what is
Lawful to them (as food),⁶⁹⁷
Say : Lawful unto you
Are (all) things good and pure :
And what ye have taught
Your trained hunting animals
(To catch) in the manner
Directed to you by God :
Eat what they catch for you,⁶⁹⁸
But pronounce the name
Of God over it : and fear
God ; for God is swift
In taking account.

6. This day are (all) things
Good and pure made lawful
Unto you. The food
Of the People of the Book⁶⁹⁹
Is lawful unto you
And yours is lawful
Unto them.
(Lawful unto you in marriage)
Are (not only) chaste women
Who are believers, but
Chaste women among
The People of the Book,⁷⁰⁰

٥- يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ
قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ
وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ مِنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ
تَعْلَمُونَ نَهْنَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ
فَكُلُوا مِمَّا أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ○

٦- الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ
وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
لَكُمْ
وَطَعَامُكُمْ حَلَالٌ لَهُمْ
وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ

697. The previous verse was negative ; it defined what was not lawful for food, viz., things gross, or disgusting or dedicated to superstition. This verse is positive : it defines what is lawful, viz., all things that are good and pure.

698. In the matter of the killing for meat, the general rule is that the name of the true God should be pronounced as a rite in order to call our attention to the fact that we do not take life thoughtlessly but solemnly for food, with the permission of God, to whom we render the life back. The question of hunting is then raised. How can this solemn rite be performed when we send forth trained hawks, trained hounds or trained cheetahs or other animals trained for the chase? They must necessarily kill at some distance from their masters. Their game is legalised on these conditions : (1) that they are trained to kill, not merely for their own appetite, or out of mere wantonness, but for their master's food ; the training implies that something of the solemnity which God has taught us in this matter goes into their action ; and (2) we are to pronounce the name of God over the quarry ; this is interpreted to mean that the *Takbir* should be pronounced when the hawk or dog, etc., is released to the quarry.

699. The question is for food generally, such as is ordinarily "good and pure" : in the matter of meat it should be killed with some sort of solemnity analogous to that of the *Takbir*. The rules of Islam in this respect being analogous to those of the People of the Book, there is no objection to mutual recognition, as opposed to meat killed by Pagans with superstitious rites. In this respect the Christian rule is the same : "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." (Acts. xv. 29.) Notice the bracketing of fornication with things unlawful to eat.

700. Islam is not exclusive. Social intercourse, including inter-marriage, is permitted with the People of the Book. A Muslim man may marry a woman from their ranks on the same terms as he would marry a Muslim woman, i.e., he must give her an economic and moral status, and must not be actuated merely by motives of lust or physical desire. A Muslim woman may not marry a non-Muslim man, because her Muslim status would be affected : the wife ordinarily takes the nationality and status given by her husband's law. A non-Muslim woman marrying a Muslim husband would be expected eventually to accept Islam. Any man or woman, of any race or faith, may, on accepting Islam, freely marry any Muslim woman or man, provided it be from motives of purity and chastity and not of lewdness.

Revealed before your time,—
When ye give them
Their due dowers, and desire
Chastity, not lewdness,
Nor secret intrigues.
If any one rejects faith,⁷⁰¹
Fruitless is his work,
And in the Hereafter
He will be in the ranks
Of those who have lost
(All spiritual good).

مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
أُجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِينَ
غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعِصَمِ الْبُرُجِ
وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِسْلَامِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ
وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ۝

C. 70.—God wishes us to be clean and pure,
(v. 7-12.) At prayer and at other times.
But justice and right conduct,
Even in the face of spite and hatred,
Are nearest to Piety and the love
Of God : in Him we put our trust.

SECTION 2.

7. ﴿٧﴾ ye who believe !
When ye prepare
For prayer, wash⁷⁰²
Your faces, and your hands
(And arms) to the elbows ;
Rub your heads (with water ;)
And (wash) your feet
To the ankles.
If ye are in a state
Of ceremonial impurity,⁷⁰³
Bathe your whole body.
But if ye are ill,
Or on a journey,
Or one of you cometh
From offices of nature,
Or ye have been
In contact with women,
And ye find no water,
Then take for yourselves
Clean sand or earth,⁷⁰⁴

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ
فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ
إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ
وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ
وَأِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا
وَأِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ
أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ
أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ
أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً
فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا

701. As always, food, cleanliness, social intercourse, marriage and other interests in life, are linked with our duty to God and faith in Him. Duty and faith are for our own benefit, here and in the Hereafter.

702. These are the essentials of Wudhū or ablutions preparatory to prayers, viz. (1) to bathe the whole face in water, and (2) both hands and arms to the elbows, with (3) a little rubbing of the head with water (as the head is usually protected and comparatively clean), and (4) the bathing of the feet to the ankles. In addition following the practice of the Apostle, it is usual first to wash the mouth, the throat, and the nose, before proceeding with the face, etc.

703. Cf. iv. 43 and n. 563. Ceremonial impurity arises from sex pollution.

704. This is *Tayammum*, or washing with clean sand or earth where water is not available. I take it that this substitute is permissible both for Wudhū and for a full bath, in the circumstances mentioned.

And rub therewith
Your faces and hands.
God doth not wish
To place you in a difficulty,
But to make you clean,
And to complete
His favour to you,
That ye may be grateful.

8. And call in remembrance
The favour of God
Unto you, and His Covenant,⁷⁰⁵
Which He ratified
With you, when ye said :
" We hear and we obey " :
And fear God, for God
Knoweth well
The secrets of your hearts.

9. O ye who believe !
Stand out firmly
For God, as witnesses ⁷⁰⁶
To fair dealing, and let not
The hatred of others
To you make you swerve ⁷⁰⁷
To wrong and depart from
Justice. Be just : that is
Next to Piety : and fear God.
For God is well-acquainted
With all that ye do.

10. To those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness
Hath God promised forgiveness
And a great reward.

فَاَمْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَاَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ
مَا يُرِيدُ اللّٰهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ
وَلَكِنْ يُّرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ
وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ

۸- وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَمِيثَاقَهُ الَّذِي وَاثَقَكُمْ بِهِ
اِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَاَطَعْنَا
وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ

۹- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوِّمِينَ
لِلّٰهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰٓ اَلَّا
تَعْدِلُوْا اِنۡعَدِلُوْا هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى
وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ

۱۰- وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّٰلِحٰتِ
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَّاَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ

⁷⁰⁵ There is a particular and a general meaning. The particular meaning refers to the solemn Pledge and Covenant taken by two groups of people at 'Aqaba, a valley near Minā, the first about fourteen months before the Hijra, and the second a little later. These were Pledges of fealty to the Apostle of God, comparable to the Covenant under Mount Sinai taken in the time of Moses. (See Q. ii, 63 and n. 78.) The general meaning has been explained in n. 682 to v. 1 : man is under a spiritual obligation under an implied Covenant with God ; God has given man reason, judgment, the higher faculties of the soul, and even the position of God's vicegerent on earth (ii, 30), and man is bound to serve God faithfully and obey His Will. That obedience begins with cleanliness in bodily functions, food, etc. It goes on to cleanliness of mind and thought, and culminates in purity of motives in the inmost recesses of his heart and soul.

⁷⁰⁶ Cf. iv. 135.

⁷⁰⁷ To do justice and act righteously in a favourable or neutral atmosphere is meritorious enough, but the real test comes when you have to do justice to people who hate you or to whom you have an aversion. But no less is required of you by the higher moral law.

11. Those who reject faith
And deny Our Signs
Will be Companions
Of Hell-fire.

۱۱- وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْحَرِّ ۖ

12. O ye who believe !
Call in remembrance
The favour of God
Unto you when
Certain men formed the design
To stretch out
Their hands against you,
But (God) held back
Their hands from you : ⁷⁰⁸
So fear God. And on God
Let Believers put
(All) their trust.

۱۲- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا
نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِذْ هَمَّ قَوْمٌ أَنْ يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ
أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۖ

C. 71.—If the men who received revelations
(v. 13-29.) Before were false to their trust,
If they broke their agreements
And twisted God's Message from its aim,
If they rebelled against Truth and followed
Their fancies, God's grace was withdrawn
From them and they wandered in the wilderness.

SECTION 3.

13. God did aforetime
Take a Covenant from
The Children of Israel,⁷⁰⁹
And We appointed twelve
Captains among them,
And God said : " I am
With you : if ye (but)
Establish regular Prayers,

۱۳- وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَٰءِيلَ
وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا
وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ
لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ

⁷⁰⁸ In the life-time of the Apostle it happened again and again that the enemies of Islam stretched out their hands against the Apostle, his people, and his teaching. The odds were, from a worldly point of view, in their favour, but their hands were rendered inert and powerless because they were fighting against the truth of God. So does it happen always, now as it did then. True faith must take heart, and at the same time humbly recognise God's favour and mercy, and be grateful.

⁷⁰⁹ Cf. ii. 63 and n. 78. "Moses...called for the elders of the people...and all the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do'." (Exod. xix. 7-8.) This was under the towering height of Mount Sinai.

The captains or elders or leaders of the people were selected, one from each of the twelve tribes (see ii. 60 and n. 73). For census purposes the names of the elders of the tribes are given in Num. i. 4-16: they are called "every one the head of the house of his fathers". Later, twelve other "heads of the Children of Israel" were selected to spy out the land of Canaan: their names are mentioned in Num. xiii. 1-16. See also, below, v. 22-29 and notes.

Practise regular Charity,
Believe in My apostles,
Honour and assist them,
And loan to God
A beautiful loan,⁷¹⁰
Verily I will wipe out
From you your evils,
And admit you to Gardens
With rivers flowing beneath ;
But if any of you, after this,
Resisteth faith, he hath truly
Wandered from the path
Of rectitude.”⁷¹¹

14. But because of their breach
Of their Covenant, We
Cursed them,⁷¹² and made
Their hearts grow hard :
They change the words
From their (right) places
And forget a good part
Of the Message that was
Sent them, nor wilt thou
Cease to find them—
Barring a few—ever
Bent on (new) deceits :⁷¹³
But forgive them, and overlook⁷¹⁴
(Their misdeeds) : for God
Loveth those who are kind.

15. From those, too, who call
Themselves Christians,

وَأَتَيْنَهُمُ الزُّكُوفَ وَأَمْنَهُمْ بِرُسُلِي
وَعَزَّزْنَاهُمْ بِأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا
لَّا أَكْفُرُنَّ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ
وَلَا دُخِلَتْكُمْ جَنَّاتُ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
فَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ○
١٤- فِيمَا نَقَضْتُمُ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ
وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً
يُحَوِّثُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ
وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ
وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى خَائِنَةٍ مِنْهُمْ
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ
فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○
١٥- وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِي

710. Cf. ii. 245, n. 276. The phrase means "spending in the cause of God." God in His infinite grace looks upon this as a loan, for which He gives a recompense manifold.

711. *The path of rectitude* : or the even way : see ii. 108, n. 109.

712. *Cursed them* : that means that because of the breach of their Covenant, God withdrew His overflowing Grace from them. The withdrawal of Grace made their hearts grow hard in two ways : (1) they were no longer protected from the assaults of evil, and (2) they became impervious even to the message of forgiveness and mercy which is open to all God's creatures.

713. Israel, when it lost God's grace as above, began to sin against truth and religion in three ways : (1) they began to misuse Scripture itself, by either taking words out of their right meaning, or applying them to things for which they were never meant ; (2) in doing so, they conveniently forgot a part of the Message and purpose of God ; and (3) they invented new deceits to support the old ones.

714. Cf. ii. 109 and n. 110, where I have explained the different shades of meaning in the words for "forgiveness."

We did take a Covenant,⁷¹⁵
 But they forget a good part
 Of the Message that was
 Sent them : so We estranged
 Them, with enmity and hatred
 Between the one and the other,
 To the Day of Judgment.
 And soon will God^{715A} show
 Them what it is
 They have done.

16. O People of the Book !
 There hath come to you
 Our Apostle, revealing
 To you much that ye
 Used to hide in the Book,
 And passing over much
 (That is now unnecessary):
17. There hath come to you
 From God a (new) light
 And a perspicuous Book.—⁷¹⁶
18. Wherewith God guideth all
 Who seek His good pleasure
 To ways of peace and safety,
 And leadeth them out
 Of darkness, by His Will,
 Unto the light,—guideth them
 To a Path that is Straight.
19. In blasphemy indeed
 Are those that say
 That God is Christ
 The son of Mary.
 Say : " Who then
 Hath the least power

أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَهُمْ
 فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ
 فَأَعْرَضْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ
 إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
 وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ○

١٦- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا
 يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ
 الْكِتَابِ
 وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ ○

١٧- قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ
 وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ○

١٨- يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ
 السَّلَامِ
 وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ
 وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ○

١٩- لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ
 قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ
 قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ

715. The Christian Covenant may be taken to be the charge which Jesus gave to his disciples, and which the disciples accepted, to welcome Ahmad (Q. lxi 6). Glimpses of this are to be found in the Gospel of St. John even as it exists now (John xv. 26, xvi, 7). It is those who call themselves "Christians" who reject this. True Christians have accepted it. The enmity between those who call themselves Christians and the Jews will continue till the Last Day.

715-A. The change from the First Person in the beginning of the verse to the Third Person here illustrates the change from the personal relationship of the Covenant, to the impersonal operation of Justice at Judgment. Cf. xxxv. 9.

716. *Mubin*: I wish I could translate by a simpler word than "perspicuous". But "plain" may mean unadorned, the opposite of beautiful, and this Book is among the most beautiful that it is the privilege of mankind to read. "Clear" would be right as far as it means "unambiguous, self-evident, not involved in mysteries of origin, history, or meaning, one which every one can understand as to the essentials necessary for him, without the intervention of priests or privileged persons". *Mubin* has all these meanings, but it suggests, besides, some quality of a shining light, by which we are able to make things clear, to distinguish the true from the false. This I think is suggested better by "perspicuous" than by the word "clear". Besides it is hardly good idiom to speak of "a clear Book."

Against God, if His Will
Were to destroy Christ
The son of Mary, his mother,
And all—every one
That is on the earth?
For to God belongeth
The dominion of the heavens
And the earth, and all
That is between. He createth ⁷¹⁷
What He pleaseth. For God
Hath power over all things."

20. (Both) the Jews and the Christians

Say : " We are sons
Of God, and His beloved." ⁷¹⁸
Say : " Why then doth He
Punish you for your sins ?
Nay, ye are but men,—
Of the men He hath created :
He forgiveth whom He pleaseth,
And He punisheth whom He
pleaseth :
And to God belongeth ⁷¹⁹
The dominion of the heavens
And the earth, and all
That is between :
And unto Him
Is the final goal (of all)."

21. O People of the Book !
Now hath come unto you,
Making (things) clear unto you,
Our Apostle, after the break ⁷²⁰

مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ النَّسِيبَ
ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَآمَتَهُ
وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا
وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٥

٢٠- وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَى
نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاؤُهُ
قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ
بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ مِمَّنْ خَلَقَ
يَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
وَاللَّهُ الْغَفُورُ ٥

٢١- يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا
يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَى فَتْرَةٍ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ

717. The most honoured of the apostles of God are but men. All power belongs to God, and not to any man. God's creation may take many forms, but because in any particular form it is different from what we see daily around us, it does not cease to be Creation, or to be subject to the power of God. No creature can be God.

718. *Sons of God*: Cf. Job, xxxviii. 7: "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." In the 29th Psalm, 1st verse, the authorised Translation "O ye mighty" should apparently be "O ye sons of Elim", El being a name of God. Cf. also Genesis, vi. 2: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men."

Beloved: Cf. Psalms, cxxvii. 2: "He giveth his beloved sleep."

If used figuratively, these and like words refer to the love of God. Unfortunately, "son" used in a physical sense, or "beloved" in an exclusive sense as if God loved only the Jews, make a mockery of religion.

719. This refrain in the last verse negatives the idea of sonship, and in this verse negatives the idea of an exclusive "Beloved". In both cases it means that God is independent of physical relationships or exclusive partiality.

720. The six hundred years (in round figures) between Christ and Muḥammad were truly the dark ages of the world. Religion was corrupted; the standard of morals fell low; many false systems and heresies arose; and there was a break in the succession of apostles until the advent of Muḥammad.

In (the series of) our apostles,
Lest ye should say :
" There came unto us
No bringer of glad tidings
And no warner (from evil) " :
But now hath come
Unto you a bringer
Of glad tidings
And a warner (from evil).
And God hath power
Over all things.

SECTION 4.

22. Remember Moses said
To his people : " O my People !
Call in remembrance the favour
Of God unto you, when He
Produced prophets among you,⁷²¹
Made you kings,⁷²² and gave
You what He had not given
To any other among the peoples.⁷²³

23. " O my people ! enter⁷²⁴
The holy land which
God hath assigned unto you
And turn not back
Ignominiously, for then
Will ye be overthrown,
To your own ruin."

أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَشِيرٍ
وَلَا نَذِيرٍ
فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٥

٢٢- وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ
يَقُومِرَ أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ مُلُوكًا
وَآتَاكُمْ مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ٥

٢٣- يَقُومِرَ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمَقْدَسَةَ
الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ
وَلَا تَوَلُّوْا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ
فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ٥

721. There was a long line of patriarchs and prophets before Moses, e.g., Abraham, Isaac, Isma'il, Jacob, etc.

722. From the slavery of Egypt the Children of Israel were made free and independent, and thus each man became as it were a king, if only he had obeyed God and followed the lead of Moses.

723. Cf. Exod. xix. 5 : " Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people." Israel was chosen to be the vehicle of God's message, the highest honour which any nation can receive.

724. We now come to the events detailed in the 13th and 14th chapters of the Book of Numbers in the Old Testament. Read these as a Commentary, and examine a good map of the Sinai Peninsula, showing its connections with Egypt on the west, North-West Arabia on the east, and Palestine on the north-east. We may suppose that Israel crossed from Egypt into the Peninsula somewhere near the northern extremity of the Gulf of Suez. Moses organised and numbered the people and instituted the Priesthood. They went south about 200 miles to Mount Sinai where the Law was received. Then, perhaps a hundred and fifty miles north, was the desert of Paran, close to the southern borders of Canaan. From the camp there twelve men were sent to spy out the land, and they penetrated as far as Hebron, say about 150 miles north of their camp, about 20 miles south of the future Jerusalem. They saw a rich country, and brought from it pomegranates and figs and a bunch of grapes so heavy that it had to be carried by two men on a staff. They came back and reported that the land was rich, but the men there were too strong for them. The people of Israel had no courage and no faith, and Moses remonstrated with them.

24. They said : " O Moses !
In this land are a people
Of exceeding strength : ⁷²⁵
Never shall we enter it
Until they leave it :
If (once) they leave,
Then shall we enter."

25. (But) among (their) God-fearing
men

Were two on whom
God had bestowed His grace : ⁷²⁶
They said : " Assault them
At the (proper) Gate :
When once ye are in,
Victory will be yours ;

26. But on God put your trust
If ye have faith."

27. They said : " O Moses !
While they remain there,
Never shall we be able
To enter, to the end of time.
Go thou, and thy Lord,
And fight ye two,
While we sit here ⁷²⁷
(And watch)."

28. He said : " O my Lord !
I have power only

٢٣- قَالُوا يٰمُوسَى اِنَّ فِيْهَا قَوْمًا جَبّٰرِيْنَ
وَ اِنَّا لَنْ نَدْخُلَهَا
حَتّٰى يَخْرُجُوْا مِنْهَا
فَاِنْ يَخْرُجُوْا مِنْهَا فَاِنَّا دٰخِلُوْنَ ٥

٢٥- قَالَ رَجُلَيْنِ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَخَافُوْنَ
اَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ
عَلَيْهِمَا اَدْخُلُوْا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ
فَاِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوْهُ فَارْكَبُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ ٥

٢٦- وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ تَوَكَّلُوْا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ٥

٢٧- قَالُوا يٰمُوسَى اِنَّا لَنْ نَدْخُلَهَا اَبَدًا
مَّا دَامُوْا فِيْهَا
فَاَذْهَبْ اَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا
اِنَّا هَاهُنَا قٰعِدُوْنَ ٥

٢٨- قَالَ رَبِّ اِنِّىْ لَا اَمْلِكُ

725. The people were not willing to follow the lead of Moses, and were not willing to fight for their "inheritance". In effect they said: "Turn out the enemy first, and then we shall enter into possession." In God's Law we must work and strive for what we wish to enjoy.

726. Among those who returned after spying out the land were two men who had faith and courage. They were Joshua and Caleb. Joshua afterwards succeeded Moses in the leadership after 40 years. These two men pleaded for an immediate entry through the proper Gate, which I understand to mean, "after taking all due precautions and making all due preparations". Cf. ii. 189 and n. 203. But of course, they said, they must put their trust in God for victory.

727. The advice of Joshua and Caleb, and the proposals of Moses under divine instructions were unpalatable to the crowd, whose prejudices were further inflamed by the other ten men who had gone with Joshua and Caleb. They made an "evil report," and were frightened by the great stature of the Canaanites. The crowd was in open rebellion, was prepared to stone Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb, and return to Egypt. Their reply to Moses was full of irony, insolence, blasphemy, and cowardice. In effect they said: "You talk of your God and all that; go with your God and fight there if you like; we shall sit here and watch."

Over myself and my brother ⁷²⁸
So separate us from this
Rebellious people!"

29. God said: "Therefore
Will the land be out
Of their reach for forty years: ⁷²⁹
In distraction will they
Wander through the land:
But sorrow thou not
Over these rebellious people.

إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَآخِي
فَأَفْرِقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ○

٢٩- قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُكْرِمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ
سَنَةً يَتِيَهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ۝

C. 72.—The jealousy of Cain against Abel,
(v. 30 46.) Which led to the murder

Of innocent Abel, is the type
Of the jealousy between the People
Of the Book and their younger brethren
In Islam. Jealousy leads to envy
And murder. Such crimes against
Individuals are often crimes
Against whole peoples. There are
Men who are ready to catch up
Every lie told against a just man.
The just man should not grieve,
For that is their way.

SECTION 5.

30. Recite to them the truth ⁷³⁰
Of the story of the two sons ⁷³¹

٣٠- وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ

728. "Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation." (Num. xiv. 5). According to the words in the Old Testament story, God said: "I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them." (Num. xiv. 12). Moses prayed and interceded. But as we are told here, (a spiritual touch not found in the Jewish story), Moses was careful to separate himself and his brother from the rebellion.

729. The punishment of the rebellion of these stiff-necked people, rebellion that was repeated "these ten times" (Num. xiv. 22) and more, was that they were left to wander distractedly hither and thither through the wilderness for forty years. That generation was not to see the Holy Land. All those that were twenty years old and upwards were to die in the wilderness: "your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness." (Num. xiv. 29). Only those who were then children would reach the promised land. And so it happened. From the desert of Paran they wandered south, north and east for forty years. From the head of what is now the Gulf of 'Aqaba, they travelled north, keeping to the east side of the depression of which the Dead Sea and the river Jordan are portions. Forty years afterwards they crossed the Jordan opposite what is now Jericho, but by that time Moses, Aaron, and the whole of the elder-generation had died.

730. Literally, "recite to them in truth the story", etc. The point is that the story in Gen. iv. 1-15 is a bare narrative, not including the lessons now to be enforced. The apostle is told now to supply the truth of the matter, the details that will enforce the lessons.

731. The two sons of Adam were Hābīl (in the English Bible, Abel) and Qābīl (in English, Cain). Cain was the elder, and Abel the younger,—the righteous and innocent one. Presuming on the right of the elder, Cain was puffed up with arrogance and jealousy, which led him to commit the crime of murder. Among the Christians, Cain was the type of the Jew as against Abel the Christian. The Jew tried to kill Jesus and exterminate the Christian. In the same way, as against Muḥammad, the younger brother of the Semitic family, Cain was the type of the Old Testament and New Testament people, who tried to resist and kill Muḥammad and put down his people.

Of Adam. Behold ! they each
Presented a sacrifice (to God) :
It was accepted from one,
But not from the other.
Said the latter : " Be sure
I will slay thee." " Surely,"
Said the former, " God
Doth accept of the sacrifice
Of those who are righteous.

31. " If thou dost stretch thy hand
Against me, to slay me,
It is not for me to stretch
My hand against thee
To slay thee : for I do fear
God, the Cherisher of the Worlds.

32. " For me, I intend to let
Thee draw on thyself
My sin as well as thine,⁷³²
For thou wilt be among
The Companions of the Fire,
And that is the reward
Of those who do wrong."⁷³³

33. The (selfish) soul of the other
Led him to the murder
Of his brother : he murdered
Him, and became (himself)
One of the lost ones.⁷³⁴

34. Then God sent a raven,
Who scratched the ground,

أَدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا
فَتَقَبَّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا
وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ
قَالَ لَا قَوْلَ لَكَ

قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ○

٣١- لَئِنْ بَسَطْتَ إِلَى يَدِكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي
مَا أَنَا بِبَاسٍ بِيَدَيْكَ إِلَيْكَ لَاقَتُكَ
إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٣٢- إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبْذُرَ بِأَثَمِي وَأَثَمَكَ
فَتَكُونُ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ
وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٣٣- فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ
فَقَتَلَهُ
وَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ○

٣٤- فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ

732. *My sin as well as thine.* There are two possible interpretations: (1) The obvious one is that the unjust murderer not only carried on himself the burden of his own sin, but also the burden of his victim's sins. The victim, in suffering a wrong or injustice, is forgiven his own sins, and the wrong-doer, having been warned, aggravates his own sin. (2) "My sin" has also been interpreted as "the sin against me, in that thou slayest me": in that case "thy sin" may mean either "thy crime in committing a murder," or "thy sin against thyself, for the crime causes real loss to thyself in the Hereafter." See the last clause of the next verse.

733. Abel's speech is full of meaning. He is innocent and God-fearing. To the threat of death held out by the other, he returns a calm reply, aimed at reforming the other. "Surely," he pleads, "if your sacrifice was not accepted, there was something wrong in you, for God is just and accepts the sacrifice of the righteous. If this does not deter you, I am not going to retaliate, though there is as much power in me against you as you have against me. I fear my Maker, for I know He cherishes all His Creation. Let me warn you that you are doing wrong. I do not intend even to resist, but do you know what the consequences will be to you? You will be in spiritual torment."

734. The innocent, unselfish pleading of the younger brother had no effect, for the soul of the other was full of pride, selfishness, and jealousy. He committed the murder, but in doing so, ruined his own self.

To show him how to hide
The shame of his brother.⁷³⁵
"Woe is me!" said he;
"Was I not even able
To be as this raven,
And to hide the shame
Of my brother?" Then he became
Full of regrets—⁷³⁶

لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُوَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ
قَالَ يُوَيْلَتِي أَجِزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ
هَذَا الْعُرَابِ فَأُوَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِي
فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ التَّائِبِينَ ٥

35. On that account: We ordained
For the Children of Israel
That if any one slew
A person—unless it be
For murder or for spreading
Mischief in the land—
It would be as if
He slew the whole people:⁷³⁷
And if any one saved a life,
It would be as if he saved
The life of the whole people.
Then although there came
To them Our Apostles
With Clear Signs, yet,
Even after that, many
Of them continued to commit
Excesses in the land.

٣٥- مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ ٥
كُتِبْنَا عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ
أَنْ تَكُونَ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا
بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَمَا كُنَّا قَتَلِ النَّاسِ جَمِيعًا
وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا
وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
ثُمَّ إِنْ كُنْثَرُوا مِنْهُمْ

36. The punishment of those
Who wage war against God
And His Apostle, and strive
With might and main
For mischief through the land⁷³⁸
Is: execution, or crucifixion,

بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَسُرُّنَا ٥
٣٦- إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا
أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا

735. *Sau-at* may mean "corpse", with a suggestion of nakedness and shame in two senses: (1) the sense of being exposed without burial, and (2) the sense of being insulted by being violently deprived, by the unwarranted murder, of the soul which inhabited it,—the soul, too, of a brother.

736. The thought at last came home to the murderer. It was dreadful indeed to slay any one—the more so as he was a brother, and an innocent, righteous brother! But worse still, the murderer had not even the decency to bury the corpse, and of this simple duty he was reminded by a raven—a black bird usually held in contempt! His regret was on that account. That was not true repentance.

737. The story of Cain is referred to in a few graphic details in order to tell the story of Israel. Israel rebelled against God, slew and insulted righteous men who did them no harm but on the contrary came in all humility. When God withdrew His favour from Israel because of its sins and bestowed it on a brother nation, the jealousy of Israel plunged it deeper into sin. To kill or seek to kill an individual because he represents an ideal is to kill all who uphold the ideal. On the other hand, to save an individual life in the same circumstances is to save a whole community. What could be stronger condemnation of individual assassination and revenge?

738. For the double crime of treason against the State, combined with treason against God, as shown by overt crimes, four alternative punishments are mentioned, any one of which is to be applied according to circumstances, *viz.*, execution (cutting off of the head), crucifixion, maiming, or exile. These were features of the Criminal Law then and for centuries afterwards, except that tortures such as "hanging, drawing, and quartering" in English Law, and piercing of eyes and leaving the unfortunate victim exposed to a tropical sun, which was practised in Arabia, and all such tortures were abolished. In any case sincere repentance before it was too late was recognised as a ground for mercy.

Or the cutting off of hands
And feet from opposite sides,⁷³⁹
Or exile from the land:
That is their disgrace
In this world, and
A heavy punishment is theirs
In the Hereafter ;

37. Except for those who repent
Before they fall
Into your power :
In that case, know
That God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

SECTION 6.

38. ﴿٣٨﴾ ye who believe !
Do your duty to God,⁷⁴⁰
Seek the means
Of approach unto Him,
And strive with might
And main in His cause :
That ye may prosper.⁷⁴¹

39. As to those who reject
Faith,—if they had
Everything on earth,
And twice repeated,
To give as ransom
For the penalty of the Day
Of Judgment, it would
Never be accepted of them.
Theirs would be
A grievous Penalty.

40. Their wish will be
To get out of the Fire,
But never will they
Get out therefrom :

أَوْ تَقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ
أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ
ذَٰلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

٣٨- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ
فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٣٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ
وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

٣٩- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا
وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ
لَيَقْتُلُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
مَا تُقْبَلُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝

٤٠- يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُخْرَجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ
وَمَا هُمْ بِمُخْرَجِينَ مِنْهَا ۝

739. Understood to mean the right hand and the left foot.

740. *Taqwā* here too might be translated "fear of God", but the very next clause shows that "fear of God" does not mean "fear" in the ordinary sense, which would make you avoid the object of fear. On the contrary the "fear of God" is the intense desire to avoid everything that is against His Will and Law. It is in fact duty to God, for we are told to seek ardently the means by which we may approach Him, and that can only be done by striving with might and main for His cause.

741. "Prosper" in the spiritual sense, for that is all that matters, as the life of this world is brief and fleeting, and of small account as against Eternity.

Their Penalty will be
One that endures.

41. As to the thief,⁷⁴²

Male or female,
Cut off his or her hands :
A punishment by way
Of example, from God,
For their crime :
And God is Exalted in Power.

42. But if the thief repent

After his crime,
And amend his conduct,
God turneth to him
In forgiveness ; for God
Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

43. Knowest thou not⁷⁴³

That to God (alone)
Belongeth the dominion
Of the heavens and the earth ?
He punisheth whom He pleaseth,
And He forgiveth whom He
pleaseth :
And God hath power
Over all things.

44. Apostle ! let not

Those grieve thee, who race
Each other into Unbelief :⁷⁴⁴
(Whether it be) among those
Who say " We believe "
With their lips but
Whose hearts have no faith ;

وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ

٣١- وَالسَّارِقِ وَالسَّارِقَةُ
فَأَقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَاءً
بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

٣٢- فَمَن تَابَ مِن بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

٣٣- أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ
أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ
وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

٣٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنَكَ الَّذِينَ
يَسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ
قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

742. Here we touch upon jurisprudence. The Canon Law jurists are not unanimous as to the value of the property stolen, which would involve the penalty of the cutting off of the hand. The majority hold that petty thefts are exempt from this punishment. The general opinion is that only one hand should be cut off for the first theft, on the principle that " if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee " (Matt. xviii. 8). Apparently in the age of Jesus thieves were crucified (Matt. xxvii. 38).

743. Punishment really does not belong to mortals, but to God alone. Only, in order to keep civil society together, and protect innocent people from crime, certain principles are laid down on which people can build up their criminal law. But we must always remember that God not only punishes but forgives, and forgiveness is the attribute which is more prominently placed before us. It is not our wisdom that can really define the bounds of forgiveness or punishment, but His Will or Plan, which is the true standard of righteousness and justice.

744. Two classes of men are meant, viz., the Hypocrites and the Jews. For both of them Muṣṭafā laboured earnestly and assiduously, and it must have been a cause of great grief and disappointment to him that some among them showed so much insincerity, cunning, and hardness of heart. These are types not yet extinct.

Or it be among the Jews,—
Men who will listen
To any lie,—will listen
Even to others who have
Never so much as come⁷⁴⁵
To thee. They change the words
From their (right) times⁷⁴⁶
And places; they say,
"If ye are given this,
Take it, but if not,
Beware!" If any one's trial
Is intended by God, thou hast
No authority in the least
For him against God.
For such—it is not
God's will to purify
Their hearts. For them
There is disgrace
In this world, and
In the Hereafter
A heavy punishment.

45. (They are fond of) listening
To falsehood, of devouring⁷⁴⁷
Anything forbidden.
If they do come to thee,
Either judge between them,
Or decline to interfere.⁷⁴⁸
If thou decline, they cannot
Hurt thee in the least.
If thou judge, judge
In equity between them.
For God loveth those
Who judge in equity.

وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ سَمِعُوا۟ لِلْكَذِبِ
سَمْعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُواكَ
بِخَبْرَتٍ مِنَ الْكَلِمِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ
يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا فَخُذُوهُ
وَلَا إِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا
وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ
فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا
أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ
أَنْ يُطَهِّرْ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَكُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ٥

٢٥- سَمِعُوا۟ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكْثَرُونَ لِلسَّحْتِ
فَإِنْ جَاءَكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ
عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا
وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ٥

745. There were men among the Jews who were eager to catch up any lie against the Apostle. They had their ears open even to tales from people who had never so much as come near to the Apostle. If we understand "for" instead of "to" before "others" (for the Arabic word would bear both meanings), the sense will be: They are keen listeners or spies for any lies they can catch; and they will act as spies for others (their Rabbis, etc.) who are in the background but to whom they carry false tales.

746. Cf. v. 14. The addition of the words *min ba'di* here suggests the change of words from their right times as well as places. They did not deal honestly with their Law, and misapplied it, by distorting the meaning. Or it may be that as tale-bearers they distorted the meaning by misrepresenting the context.

747. *Devouring anything forbidden*: both in a literal and in a figurative sense. In the figurative sense, it would be: the taking of usury or bribes, or taking undue advantage of people's weak position or their own fiduciary powers to add to their own wealth.

748. Where it is merely a trick to catch out the unwary, a just man may honourably decline to interfere in a cause submitted to him, as also in a case where the parties are not honestly desirous of justice, but each hopes that some partiality will be shown to it.

46. But why do they come?⁷⁴⁹
 To thee for decision,
 When they have (their own)
 Laws before them?—
 Therein is the (plain)
 Command of God; yet
 Even after that, they would
 Turn away. For they
 Are not (really)
 People of Faith.

٢٧- وَكَيْفَ يُحْكُمُونَكَ
 وَعِنْدَهُمُ التَّوْرَةُ
 فِيهَا حُكْمُ اللَّهِ
 ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
 وَمَا أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

C. 73.—True justice accords with God's Law.

(v. 47-89.) Follow not men's selfish desires,
 But God's Will, which was revealed
 To Moses and Jesus, and now to Muḥammad.
 Take not for friends and protectors
 Those in whose hearts is a disease,—
 To whom religion is a mockery
 Or a plaything,—who worship evil.
 Proclaim the Truth of God, and be
 Not afraid. Eschew their iniquities,
 Which were denounced by David
 And Jesus. But recognise with justice
 Those who are sincere and humble,
 Though they may be themselves
 Not of your flock, if they witness to Truth.

SECTION 7.

47. It was We who revealed
 The Law (to Moses): therein
 Was guidance and light.⁷⁵⁰
 By its standard have been judged
 The Jews, by the Prophets
 Who bowed (as in Islam)
 To God's Will, by the Rabbis⁷⁵¹
 And the Doctors of Law:

٢٨- إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ
 يُحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا
 لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا
 وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ

749. This is a searching question as to the motive of the Jews in bringing their cases for decision to the Apostle. They came either (1) to ridicule whatever he said, or (2) to deceive him as to facts and snatch a favourable decision which was against equity. If their own Law did not suit their selfish interests, they sometimes twisted it. But Muḥammad was always inflexible in his justice.

750. *Guidance*, with reference to conduct; *light*, with reference to insight into the higher realms of the spirit.

751. *Rabbānī* may, I think, be rightly translated by the Jewish title of *Rabbi* for their learned men, Jewish learning is identified with Rabbinical literature. *Aḥbār* is the plural of *ḥibr* or *ḥabr*, by which we may understand Jewish Doctors of Law. Later, the term was applied to those of other religions. Query: Is the word connected with the same root as "Hebrew", or "Eber" (Gen. x. 21), the ancestor of the Hebrew race? This seems negatived by the fact that the Arabic root connected with the word "Hebrew" is *Abar*, not *Ḥabar*.

For to them was entrusted
The protection of God's Book,
And they were witnesses thereto:⁷⁵²
Therefore fear not men,
But fear Me, and sell not
My Signs for a miserable price.⁷⁵³
If any do fail to judge
By (the light of) what God
Hath revealed, they are
(No better than) Unbelievers.

بِمَا اسْتَحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ
شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاخْشَوْنَا
وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ٥

48. We ordained therein for them:⁷⁵⁴
"Life for life, eye for eye,
Nose for nose, ear for ear,
Tooth for tooth, and wounds
Equal for equal." But if
Any one remits the retaliation
By way of charity, it is
An act of atonement for himself.⁷⁵⁵
And if any fail to judge
By (the light of) what God
Hath revealed, they are
(No better than) wrong-doers.⁷⁵⁶

٣٨- وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا
أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ
وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ
وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ
فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَهُ وَمَنْ لَمْ
يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

49. And in their footsteps
We sent Jesus the son

٣٩- وَفَقَيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِمُ يُعِيسَى ابْنَ

752. They were living witnesses to the truth of Scripture, and could testify that they had made it known to the people: *Chap.* 143, and iv. 135.

753. Two charges are made against the Jews: (1) that even the books which they had, they twisted in meaning, to suit their own purposes, because they feared men rather than God: (2) that what they had was but fragments of the original Law given to Moses, mixed up with a lot of semi-historical and legendary matter, and some fine poetry. The *Taurāt* mentioned in the Qur-ān is not the Old Testament as we have it: nor is it even the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament, containing the Law embedded in a great deal of semi-historical and legendary narrative). See Appendix II, on the *Taurāt* (printed at the end of this Sūra).

754. The relation is prescribed in three places in the Pentateuch, viz., Exod. xxi. 23-25; Leviticus xxiv. 18-21, and Deut. xix. 21. The wording in the three quotations is different, but in none of them is found the additional rider for mercy, as here. Note that in Matt. v. 38, Jesus quotes the Old Law "eye for eye," etc., and modifies it in the direction of forgiveness, but the Quranic injunction is more practical. This appeal for mercy is as between man and man in the spiritual world. Even where the injured one forgives, the State or Ruler is competent to take such action as is necessary for the preservation of law and order in Society. For crime has a bearing that goes beyond the interests of the person injured: the Community is affected: see Q. v. 35.

755. This is not part of the Mosaic Law, but the teaching of Jesus and of Muḥammad. Notice how the teaching of Jesus is gradually introduced as leading up to the Qur-ān.

756. The seeming repetitions at the end of verses 47, 48, and 50 are not real repetitions. The significant words in the three cases are: Unbelievers, wrong-doers, and rebellious: and each fits the context. If the Jews tamper with their books they are Unbelievers; if they give false judgments, they are wrong-doers. If the Christians follow not their light, they are rebellious.

Of Mary, confirming
The Law that had come
Before him: We sent him
The Gospel: therein
Was guidance and light,⁷⁵⁷
And confirmation of the Law
That had come before him:
A guidance and an admonition
To those who fear God.

50. Let the People of the Gospel
Judge by what God hath revealed
Therein. If any do fail
To judge by (the light of)
What God hath revealed.
They are (no better than)
Those who rebel.⁷⁵⁸

51. ~~And~~ to thee We sent the Scripture
In truth, confirming
The scripture that came
Before it, and guarding it⁷⁵⁹
In safety: so judge
Between them by what
God hath revealed,
And follow not their vain
Desires, diverging
From the Truth that hath come
To thee. To each among you
Have We prescribed a Law
And an Open Way.⁷⁶⁰
If God had so willed,
He would have made you⁷⁶¹
A single People, but (His

مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ
وَأَنبِئْنَاهُ بِمَا نَحْنُ بِهِ هَدًى وَنُورًا
وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ
وَهَدًى
وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

٥٠. وَلِيَحْكُمَ أَهْلُ الْإِنجِيلِ بِمَا أَنزَلَ
اللَّهُ فِيهِ
وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ۝

٥١. وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ
بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ
الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ
فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ
عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ
لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شُرْعَةً وَمِنْهَا جَا
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً

757. *Guidance and light*: see n. 750 above. For the meaning of the Gospel (Injil), see Appendix III, "On the *Injil*", (printed at the end of this *Sūra*).

758. See n. 756 above.

759. After the corruption of the older revelations, the *Qur-ān* comes with a twofold purpose: (1) to confirm the true and original Message, and (2) to guard it, or act as a check to its interpretation. For example, if people seek retaliation in a spirit of revenge, it holds forth mercy. If they glibly mask their cowardice or sentimentalism by empty talk of "turning the other cheek," it tests them by the practical test of forgiveness and mercy.

760. *Law*: *shir'at*=rules of practical conduct. *Open Way*: *Minhāj*=the finer things which are above the law, but which are yet available to every one, like a sort of open highway. The *light* in verses 47 and 49 above, I understand to be something in the still higher regions of the spirit, which is common to mankind, though laws and rules may take different forms among different Peoples.


761. By origin mankind were a single people or nation: iv. 1, and ii. 213. That being so, God could have kept us all alike, with one language, one kind of disposition, and one set of physical conditions (including climate) to live in. But in His wisdom, He gives us diversity in these things, not only at any given time, but in different periods and ages. This tests our capacity for Unity (*Waḥdāniyat*) still more, and accentuate the need of Unity and Islam.

Plan is) to test you in what
He hath given you : so strive
As in a race in all virtues.
The goal of you all is to God ;
It is He that will show you
The truth of the matters
In which ye dispute ; ⁷⁶²

52. And this (He commands) :
Judge thou between them
By what God hath revealed,
And follow not their vain
Desires, but beware of them
Lest they beguile thee
From any of that (teaching)
Which God hath sent down
To thee. And if they turn
Away, be assured that
For some of their crimes
It is God's purpose to punish
Them. And truly most men
Are rebellious.

53. Do they then seek after
A judgment of (the Days ⁷⁶³
Of) Ignorance ? But who,
For a people whose faith
Is assured, can give
Better judgment than God ?

SECTION 8.

54.  ye who believe !
Take not the Jews
And the Christians
For your friends and protectors ⁷⁶⁴
They are but friends and protectors
To each other. And he

وَلَكِنْ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ
فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ
إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ۝
٥٢- وَأَنْ أَحْكَمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ
وَاحْذَرُهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا
أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ إِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ
بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ
وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ۝

٥٣- أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ
وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ
يُوْقِنُونَ ۝

٥٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى أَوْلِيَاءَ
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۖ وَمَنْ

762. As our true goal is God, the things that seem different to us from different points of view, will ultimately be reconciled in Him. Einstein is right in plumbing the depths of Relativity in the world of physical science. It points more and more to the need of Unity in God in the spiritual world.


763. The Days of ignorance were the days of tribalism, feuds, and selfish accentuation of differences in man. Those days are really not yet over. It is the mission of Islam to take us away from that false mental attitude, towards the true attitude of Unity. If our Faith is certain (and not merely a matter of words), God will guide us to that Unity.

764. That is, look not to them for help and comfort. They are more likely to combine against you than to help you. And this happened more than once in the lifetime of the Apostle, and in after-ages again and again. He who associates with them and shares their counsels must be counted as of them. The trimmer loses whichever way the wheel of fortune turns.

Amongst you that turns to them
(For friendship) is of them.
Verily God guideth not
A people unjust.

55. Those in whose hearts ⁷⁶⁵
Is a disease—thou seest
How eagerly they run about
Amongst them, saying :
“ We do fear lest a change
Of fortune bring us disaster.”
Ah ! perhaps God will give
(Thee) victory, or a decision
According to His Will.
Then will they repent
Of the thoughts which they secretly
Harboured in their hearts.

56. And those who believe
Will say : “ Are these
The men who swore
Their strongest oaths by God,
That they were with you ? ” ⁷⁶⁶
All that they do
Will be in vain,
And they will fall
Into (nothing but) ruin.

57.  ye who believe !
If any from among you
Turn back from his Faith,
Soon will God produce
A people whom He will love
As they will love Him,—
Lowly with the Believers,
Mighty against the Rejecters,
Fighting in the Way of God,
And never afraid
Of the reproaches

يَتَوَلَّوْهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَأَنْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥٥

٥٥- فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ
يُسَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ
يَقُولُونَ خَشِيَ أَنْ تَصِيبَنَا دَافِعَةٌ
فَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِّنْ
عِنْدِهِ فَيُضْبِحُوا
عَلَى مَا آسَرُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ دُغَائِيقًا ٥٥

٥٦- وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ
أَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ
إِنَّهُمْ لَعَمْرُكَ
كَوْطًا أَعْمَالُهُمْ
فَأَصْبَحُوا خَاسِرِينَ ٥٦

٥٧- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
مَنْ يُزِدْكُم مِّنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ
فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ
أَذَلَّةً عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةً عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ
يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ٥٧

765. Cf. ii. 10.

766. The Hypocrites, while matters were doubtful, pretended to be with Muslims, but were in league with their enemies. When matters came to a decision and God granted victory to Islam, their position was awkward. They were not only disowned by the Muslims, but the Muslims could well say in reproach to their enemies : “ Are these the men who swore friendship for you ? What was their friendship worth to you ? Where are they now ? ”

Of such as find fault.⁷⁶⁷
That is the Grace of God,
Which He will bestow
On whom He pleaseth.
And God encompasseth all,
And He knoweth all things.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ
يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ


58. Your (real) friends are
(No less than) God,
His Apostle, and the (Fellowship
Of) Believers,—those who
Establish regular prayers
And regular charity,
And they bow
Down humbly (in worship.)

٥٨- إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا
الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ
وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

59. As to those who turn
(For friendship) to God,
His Apostle, and the (Fellowship
Of) Believers,—it is
The Fellowship of God
That must certainly triumph.

٥٩- وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ

SECTION 9.

60.  ye who believe !
Take not for friends
And protectors those
Who take your religion
For a mockery or sport,—⁷⁶⁸
Whether among those
Who received the Scripture
Before you, or among those

٦٠- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُوًا
وَأَعْبَاءً
مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ

767. As "most men are rebellious" (v. 52), it is inevitable that there should be apostates even from such a religion of reason and common-sense as Islam. But here is a warning to the Muslim body that they should not repeat the history of the Jews, and become so self-satisfied or arrogant as to depart from the spirit of God's teaching. If they do, the loss will be their own. God's bounty is not confined to one group or section of humanity. He can always raise up people who will follow the true spirit of Islam. That spirit is defined in two ways: first, in general terms; they will love God and God will love them; and secondly, by specific signs; amongst the Brethren, their attitude will be that of humility, but to wrong-doers they will offer no mealy-mouthed compromises; they will always strive and fight for truth and right; they will know no fear, either physical, or that more insidious form, which says: "What will people say if we act thus?" They are too great in mind to be haunted by any such thought. For, as the next verse says, their friends are God, His Apostle, and His people, the people who judge rightly, without fear or favour.

768. It is not right that we should be in intimate association with those to whom religion is either a subject of mockery or at best is nothing but a plaything. They may be amused, or they may have other motives for encouraging you. But your association with them will sap the earnestness of your Faith, and make you cynical and insincere.

Who reject Faith ;
But fear ye God,
If ye have Faith (indeed).

61. When ye proclaim
Your call to prayer,
They take it (but)
As mockery and sport ;
That is because they are
A people without understanding.

62. Say: " O People of the Book !
Do ye disapprove of us
For no other reason than
That we believe in God,
And the revelation
That hath come to us
And that which came
Before (us), and (perhaps)
That most of you
Are rebellious and disobedient " ? ⁷⁶⁹

63. Say : " Shall I point out
To you something much worse
Than this, (as judged)
By the treatment it received
From God ? Those who
Incurred the curse of God
And His wrath, those of whom
He transformed into apes and ^{some}
swine, ⁷⁷⁰
Those who worshipped Evil ;—
These are (many times) worse
In rank, and far more astray
From the even Path !"

64. ~~When~~ When they come to thee,
They say : " We believe " :

وَالْكَافَرِ أُولَئِكَ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٦١- وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ
اتَّخَذُوا هَٰذَا هُزُوًا وَلَعِبًا
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ○

٦٢- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ
هَلْ تَنْقُضُونَ مِيثَاقَ اللَّهِ
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ
وَأَنْ أَكُنْتُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ○

٦٣- قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِنْ ذَٰلِكَ
مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ
وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْفُرْدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ
الطَّاغُوتَ
أُولَٰئِكَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا
وَأَضَلُّ عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ○

٦٤- وَإِذَا جَاءُوكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا

769. There is the most biting irony in this and the next verse. 'You People of the Book ! Do you hate us because we believe in God and not only our scripture, but yours also ? Perhaps you hate us because we obey and you are in rebellion against God ! Why hate us ? There are worse things than our obedience and our Faith. Shall I tell you some of them ? Our test will be : what treatment God meted out to the things I mention. Who were the people who incurred the curse of God ? (See Deut. xi, 28, and xxviii, 15-68 ; and numerous passages like Hosea viii, 14, and ix, 1). Who provoked God's wrath ? (See numerous passages like Deut. i, 34 ; Matt, iii, 7.) Who forsook God, and worshipped evil ? (See Jeremiah, xvi, 11-13.) That is your record. Is that why you hate us ?'

770. For apes see Q. ii, 65. For men possessed by devils, and the devils being sent into swine, see Matt. viii, 28-32. Or perhaps both apes and swine are allegorical : those who falsified God's scriptures became lawless like apes, and those who succumbed to filth, gluttony, or gross living became like swine,

But in fact they enter
With a mind against Faith,
And they go out
With the same.
But God knoweth fully
All that they hide.

65. Many of them dost thou
See, racing each other
In sin and rancour,
And their eating of things ⁷⁷¹
Forbidden. Evil indeed
Are the things that they do.

66. Why do not the Rabbis
And the doctors of law forbid
Them from their (habit
Of) uttering sinful words
And eating things forbidden ?
Evil indeed are their works.

67. ~~The~~ Jews say : " God's hand ⁷⁷²
Is tied up." Be *their* hands
Tied up and be they accursed
For the (blasphemy) they utter.
Nay, both His hands
Are widely outstretched :
He giveth and spendeth
(Of His bounty) as He pleaseth.
But the revelation that
Cometh to thee from God
Increaseth in most of them
Their obstinate rebellion ⁷⁷³
And blasphemy. Amongst them
We have placed enmity ⁷⁷⁴

وَقَدْ دَخَلُوا بِالْكَفْرِ
وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوا بِهِ
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْتُمُونَ ○

٦٥- وَتَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي
الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ الشَّيْءَ
الْبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

٦٦- لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ
عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ الشَّيْءَ
الْبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ○

٦٧- وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ
عُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلَعْنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا
بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ
يُنْفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ
وَلَكِنْ زَيْدٌ كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ
مَّا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا
وَأَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ

771. *Eating of things forbidden* : may be construed in a literal or a figurative sense. From its juxtaposition with sin and hatred, it is better to construe it in a figurative sense, as referring to their fraudulent misappropriations of other people's property or trust property. "Eating" is used in v. 69 below in the general sense of enjoyment and happiness.

772. Cf. v. 13, and ii. 245, for a "beautiful loan to God", and iii. 181, for the blasphemous taunt, "Then God is poor!" It is another form of the taunt to say, "Then God's hands are tied up, He is close-fisted, He does not give!" This blasphemy is repudiated. On the contrary, boundless is God's bounty, and He gives, as it were, with both hands outstretched,—a figure of speech for unbounded liberality.

773. Their jealousy—because *Mustafa* is chosen for God's Message—is so great that it only confirms and strengthens their rebellion and blasphemy.

774. Cf. v. 15, where the eternal warring of the Christian sects, among themselves and against the Jews, is referred to. The reference is to the whole of the People of the Book, Jews and Christians,—their internal squabbles and their external disputes, quarrels, and wars.

And hatred till the Day
Of Judgment. Every time
They kindle the fire of war,
God doth extinguish it ;
But they (ever) strive
To do mischief on earth.
And God loveth not
Those who do mischief.⁷⁷⁵

68. If only the People of the Book
Had believed and been righteous,
We should indeed have
Blotted out their iniquities
And admitted them
To Gardens of Bliss.

69. If only they had stood fast
By the Law, the Gospel,
And all the revelation that was sent
To them from their Lord,
They would have enjoyed
Happiness from every side.⁷⁷⁶
There is from among them
A party on the right course :
But many of them
Follow a course that is evil.

SECTION 10.

70. ﴿٢٧﴾ Apostle ! proclaim
The (Message) which hath been
Sent to thee from thy Lord.⁷⁷⁷
If thou didst not, thou

وَالْبَغْضَاءُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ
كُلَّمَا أَوقَدُوا نَارًا لِلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ
وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ○

٦٨- وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا
لَكَفَرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ
وَلَا دَخَلْنَاهُمْ جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ○

٦٩- وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
لَأَكَلُوا مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ
وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَمِنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُقْتَصِدَةٌ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ سَاءٌ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

٢٧- يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ
مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ

775. The argument of the whole verse may be thus stated. The Jews blaspheme and mock, and because of their jealousy, the more they are taught, the more obstinate they become in their rebellion. But what good will it do to them? Their selfishness and spite sow quarrels among themselves, which will not be healed till the Day of Judgment. When they stir up wars, especially against the innocent, God's Mercy is poured down like a flood of water to extinguish them. But their wickedness continues to devise ever new mischief. And God loves not mischief or those who do mischief.

776. The literal translation of the two lines would be : " They would have eaten from above them and from below their feet." To eat (*akala*) is a very comprehensive word, and denotes enjoyment generally, physical, social, mental and moral, and spiritual. " To eat what is forbidden " in verses 65 and 66 referred to taking unlawful profit, from usury or trust funds or in other ways. Here " eating " would seem to mean receiving satisfaction or happiness in ordinary life as well as in the spiritual world. " From above them " may refer to heavenly or spiritual satisfaction, and " from below their feet " to earthly satisfaction. But it is better to take the words as a general idiom, and understand " satisfaction or happiness from every side."

777. Muhammad had many difficulties to contend with, many enemies and dangers to avoid. This is to assure him that his Message was true and from God. His mission must be fulfilled. And he must—as he did—go forward and proclaim that Message and fulfil his mission, trusting to God for protection, and unconcerned if people who had lost all sense of right rejected it or threatened him.

Wouldst not have fulfilled
And proclaimed His Mission.
And God will defend thee
From men (who mean mischief).
For God guideth not
Those who reject Faith.

71. Say : "O People of the Book !
Ye have no ground
To stand upon unless
Ye stand fast by the Law,
The Gospel, and all the revelation
That has come to you from
Your Lord." It is the revelation
That cometh to thee from
Thy Lord, that increaseth in most
Of them their obstinate
Rebellion and blasphemy.
But sorrow thou not
Over (these) people without Faith.⁷⁷⁸

72. Those who believe (in the Qur-ān),
Those who follow the Jewish
(scriptures),
And the Sabians and the
Christians,—
Any who believe in God
And the Last Day,
And work righteousness,—⁷⁷⁹
On them shall be no fear,
Nor shall they grieve.

73. We took the Covenant
Of the Children of Israel
And sent them apostles.
Every time there came
To them an apostle
With what they themselves
Desired not—some
(Of these) they called

فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

٤١- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ
حَتَّى تَقِيمُوا الشُّرُوءَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
وَلَكِنْ يَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ
مِنْ رَبِّكَ
طُعْيَانًا وَكَفْرًا
فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

٤٢- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّيُّونَ وَالنَّصَارَى
مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا
فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٤٣- لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ
وَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ رُسُلًا
كُلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ
بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا

778. In v. 29 Moses was told not to sorrow over a rebellious people. Here Muḥammad is told not to sorrow over people without Faith. The second situation is even more trying than the first. Rebellion may be a passing phase. Want of faith is an attitude of mind that is well-nigh hopeless. Yet the Apostle patiently reasoned with them and bore their taunts and insults. If, the argument runs, you do not believe in anything, even in the things that you may be expected to believe in, how can you receive in Faith God's Message that has come in another form? In fact your jealousy adds to your obstinacy and unbelief.

779. Cf. ii. 62. As God's Message is one, Islam recognises true faith in other forms, provided that it be sincere, supported by reason, and backed up by righteous conduct. Note 76 explains who the Sabians were.

Impostors, and some they
(Go so far as to) slay.⁷⁸⁰

74. They thought there would be
No trial (or punishment) ;
So they became blind and deaf ;⁷⁸¹
Yet God (in mercy) turned
To them ; yet again many
Of them became blind and deaf.
But God sees well
*All that they do.

75. They do blaspheme who say :
" God is Christ the son
Of Mary." But said Christ : ⁷⁸²
" O Children of Israel !
Worship God, my Lord
And your Lord." Whoever
Joins other gods with God,—
God will forbid him
The Garden, and the Fire
Will be his abode. There will
For the wrong-doers
Be no one to help.

76. They do blaspheme who say :
God is one of three
In a Trinity : for there is
No god except One God.
If they desist not
From their word (of blasphemy),
Verily a grievous penalty
Will befall the blasphemers
Among them.

77. Why turn they not to God,
And seek His forgiveness ?
For God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

78. Christ the son of Mary
Was no more than
An Apostle ; many were
The apostles that passed away

كَذَّبُوا وَفَرَّقُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ۝

٤٢- وَحَسَبُوا إِلَّا تَكُونُ فِتْنَةً فَعَمُوا
صَوًّا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
ثُمَّ عَمُوا وَصَوُّوا كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ
وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

٤٥- لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ
الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ
وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَبْنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ عِبَادُوا
اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّ مَنْ يَشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ
فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ
وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ۝

٤٦- لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثُ
ثَلَاثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ
وَأِنْ لَمْ يَنْتَهُوا
عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْهُمْ عَذَابُ الْيَوْمِ ۝

٤٧- أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٤٨- مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ
قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ۝

780. Cf. ii. 87, and n. 91.

781. That is, they turned away their eyes from God's Signs and they turned a deaf ear to God's Message.

782. Cf. Matt. iv. 10, where Christ rebukes Satan for desiring the worship of other than God ; John xx. 17, where Christ says to Mary Magdalene, " Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father ; and to my God and your God." Cf. also Luke xviii. 19, where Christ rebukes a certain ruler for calling him Good Master : " Why callest thou me good ? None is good, save One, that is, God." In Mark xii. 25 Jesus says : " The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel ! the Lord our God is One Lord."

Before him. His mother
Was a woman of truth.⁷⁸³
They had both to eat
Their (daily) food.
See how God doth make
His Signs clear to them ;⁷⁸⁴
Yet see in what ways
They are deluded
Away from the truth !

79. Say : " Will ye worship,
Besides God, something
Which hath no power either
To harm or benefit you ?
But God,—He it is
That heareth and knoweth
All things."

80. Say : " O People of the Book !
Exceed not in your religion⁷⁸⁵
The bounds (of what is proper),
Trespassing beyond the truth,
Nor follow the vain desires
Of people who went wrong
In times gone by,—who misled
Many, and strayed (themselves)
From the even Way.

SECTION 11.

81. Curses were pronounced
On those among the Children
Of Israel who rejected Faith,
By the tongue of David⁷⁸⁶
And of Jesus the son of Mary :⁷⁸⁷
Because they disobeyed
And persisted in Excesses.

وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ
كَانَا يَأْكُلْنَ الطَّعَامَ
أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ بُيِّنَ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ
ثُمَّ أَنْظُرْ إِلَىٰ يُؤْفِكُونَ ○

٧٩- قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ
مَا لَا يَنفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَضُرُّ
وَاللَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

٨٠- قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ
لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِن قَبْلُ
وَاضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا
وَضَلُّوا عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ○

٨١- لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ
عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ
ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ○

783. She never claimed that she was a mother of God, or that her son was God. She was a pious virtuous woman.

784. Note how logically the argument has led up from Jewish back-slidings and want of faith, to blasphemies associated with the names of Jesus and Mary, and in the following verses to the worship of senseless stocks and stones. God is one ; His Message is one ; yet how people's perversity transforms truth into falsehood, religion into superstition !

785. Excess, as opposed to moderation and reason, is the simplest test by which a hypocrite or a selfish man who "trades" on religion, is known from a sincere, pious, and truly religious man. Excess means that truth is sometimes concealed or trampled upon, that the fashions of ancestors or contemporaries are copied or overdone, and God's name is dishonoured by blasphemies or the setting up of false gods or fetishes, or that good (or even bad) men are deified and worshipped. The true path is the even path, the path of rectitude. (Cf. ii. 108, and v. 13).

786. The Psalms of David have several passages of imprecations against the wicked. Cf. Psalms cix. 17-18 ; lxxviii. 21-22 ("Therefore the Lord heard this and was wroth : so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel ; because they believed not in God, and trusted not in His salvation") ; Psalms lxix. 22-28, and Psalms v. 10.

787. Cf. Matt. xxiii. 33 ("Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell ?") ; also Matt. xii. 34.

82. Nor did they (usually)
 Forbid one another ⁷⁸⁸
 The iniquities which they
 Committed : evil indeed
 Were the deeds which they did.

83. Thou seest many of them
 Turning in friendship
 To the Unbelievers.
 Evil indeed are (the works) which
 Their souls have sent forward
 Before them (with the result),
 That God's wrath
 Is on them,
 And in torment
 Will they abide.

84. If only they had believed
 In God, in the Apostle,
 And in what hath been
 Revealed to him, never
 Would they have taken
 Them for friends and protectors,
 But most of them are
 Rebellious wrong-doers.

85. Strongest among men in enmity
 To the Believers wilt thou
 Find the Jews and Pagans ;
 And nearest among them in love
 To the Believers wilt thou
 Find those who say, ⁷⁸⁹
 " We are Christians " :
 Because amongst these are
 Men devoted to learning ⁷⁹⁰
 And men who have renounced
 6 The world, and they
 30 Are not arrogant.

٨٢- كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ
 لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ○

٨٣- تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ
 يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
 لَبِئْسَ مَا قَدْ مَتَّ لَهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ
 أَنْ سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
 وَفِي الْعَذَابِ لَهُمْ خُلْدٌ ○

٨٤- وَلَوْ كَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
 وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ
 مَا اتَّخَذُوا لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ
 وَلَكِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ فَسِقُونَ ○

٨٥- لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ
 آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا
 وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
 الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِي ذَلِكَ يَأْتِيهِمْ
 قَبِيلٌ يَبْسُتُونَ وَهُمْ بَنَاتُ
 وَأَتَاهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ○

788. There are bad men in every community, but if leaders connive at the misdeeds of the commonalty,—and even worse, if leaders themselves share in the misdeeds, as happened with the Pharisees and Scribes against whom Jesus spoke out, then that community is doomed.

789. The meaning is not that they merely call themselves Christians, but that they are such sincere Christians that they appreciate Muslim virtues, as did the Abyssinians to whom Muslim refugees went during the persecution in Mecca. They would say : " It is true we are Christians, but we understand your point of view, and we know you are good men." They are Muslims at heart, whatever their label may be.

790. *Qissis* : I have translated as " devoted to learning," following the Commentators. It seems to be a foreign word, possibly Abyssinian rather than Syriac, as the reference seems to be to the Abyssinian Christians. Their real devotion to learning and the renunciation of the world by the Monastic Orders are contrasted with the hypocrisy and arrogance of the Pharisees and Scribes.

86. And when they listen
To the revelation received
By the Apostle, thou wilt
See their eyes overflowing
With tears, for they
Recognise the truth :
They pray : " Our Lord !
We believe ; write us
Down among the witnesses.

87. " What cause can we have
Not to believe in God
And the truth which has
Come to us, seeing that
We long for our Lord
To admit us to the company
Of the righteous ? "

88. And for this their prayer
Hath God rewarded them
With Gardens, with rivers
Flowing underneath,—their eternal
Home. Such is the recompense
Of those who do good.

89. But those who reject Faith
And belie Our Signs,—
They shall be Companions
Of Hell-fire.

٨٦- وَإِذْ أَسْمِعُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ
تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ
مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ
يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا
فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ○

٨٧- وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ
وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ
وَنَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَدْخُلَنَا رَبَّنَا
مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصَّالِحِينَ ○

٨٨- فَأَثَابَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْحَسَنِينَ ○

٨٩- وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ○

C. 74.—In the physical pleasures of life

(v. 90-111.) The crime is excess : there is no merit
In abstention from things that are good
And lawful. Take no rash vows,
But to solemn oaths be faithful. Shun
As abominations drinking and gambling,
And superstitions of all kinds.
But be reverent to what is sacred
In rites and associations. Not the same
Are things good and things evil.
Learn to distinguish, but pry not
Into questions beyond your ken.
Guard your own souls in truth
And justice, and no harm can befall you.

SECTION 12.

90. ﴿٩٠﴾ ye who believe !
Make not unlawful

٩٠- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْزُمُوا

The good things which God
Hath made lawful for you,
But commit no excess : ⁷⁹¹
For God loveth not
Those given to excess.

91. Eat of the things which
God hath provided for you,
Lawful and good ; but fear
God, in Whom ye believe.

92. God will not call you
To account for what is
Futile in your oaths, ⁷⁹²
But He will call you
To account for your deliberate
Oaths : for expiation, feed
Ten indigent persons,
On a scale of the average
For the food of your families ;
Or clothe them ; or give
A slave his freedom.
If that is beyond your means,
Fast for three days.
That is the expiation
For the oaths ye have sworn.
But keep to your oaths.
Thus doth God make clear
To you His Signs, that ye
May be grateful.

93. O ye who believe !
Intoxicants and gambling, ⁷⁹³

طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ
وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ○

٩١- وَكُلُوا مِنَّمَا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ○

٩٢- لَا يُؤْخَذُ كُمْ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ
وَلَكِنْ يُؤْخَذُ كُمْ بِمَا عَقَدْتُمُ الْإِيمَانَ
مَكَفَّارَةً لِأَطْعَامِ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ
مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا نَطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ
أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ
فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ
كَفَّارَةُ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ
وَاحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ○

٩٣- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ

791. In pleasures that are good and lawful the crime is excess. There is no merit [merely in abstinence or asceticism, though the humility or unselfishness that may go with asceticism may have its value. In v. 85 Christian monks are praised for particular virtues, though here and elsewhere monasticism is disapproved of. Use God's gifts of all kinds with gratitude but excess is not approved of by God.

792. Vows of penance or abstinence may sometimes be futile, or even stand in the way of a really good or virtuous act. See ii, 224-226 and notes. The general principles established are : (1) take no futile oaths ; (2) use not God's name, literally or in intention to fetter yourself against doing a lawful or good act ; (3) keep to your solemn oaths to the utmost of your ability ; (4) where you are unable to do so, expiate your failure by feeding or clothing the poor, or obtaining someone's freedom, or if you have not the means, by fasting. This is from a spiritual aspect. If any party suffers damage from your failure, compensation will be due to him, but that would be a question of law or equity.

793. Cf. ii, 219, and notes 240 and 241.

(Dedication of) stones,⁷⁹⁴
 And (divination by) arrows,⁷⁹⁵
 Are an abomination,—
 Of Satan's handiwork :
 Eschew such (abomination),
 That ye may prosper.

وَالْأَصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ
 رَجَسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ
 فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ○

94. Satan's plan is (but)
 To excite enmity and hatred
 Between you, with intoxicants
 And gambling, and hinder you
 From the remembrance
 Of God, and from prayer :
 Will ye not then abstain ?

٩٤- إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ
 أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي
 الْخَمْرِ وَالْيَيْسِرِ وَيُصَدِّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
 وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ○

95. Obey God, and obey the Apostle,⁷⁹⁶
 And beware (of evil) :
 If ye do turn back,
 Know ye that it is
 Our Apostle's duty
 To proclaim (the Message)⁷⁹⁷
 In the clearest manner.

٩٥- وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ
 وَاحْذَرُوا
 فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا إِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا
 الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ○

96. On those who believe
 And do deeds of righteousness
 There is no blame
 For what they ate (in the past),
 When they guard themselves
 From evil, and believe,
 And do deeds of righteousness,—
 (Or) again, guard themselves
 From evil and believe,—
 (Or) again, guard themselves
 From evil and do good.

٩٦- لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
 الصَّالِحَاتِ
 جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا
 وَآمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
 ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا
 ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَأَحْسَنُوا

794. Cf. v. 4. The stones there referred to were stone altars or stone columns on which oil was poured for consecration, or slabs on which meat was sacrificed to idols. Any idolatrous or superstitious practices are here condemned. The anṣāb were objects of worship, and were common in Arabia before Islam. See Renan, "History of Israel", Chapter iv. and *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*, Part I. p. 154: Illustrations Nos. 123 and 123 bis are Phœnician columns of that kind, found in Malta.


795. Cf. v. 4. The arrows there referred to were used for the division of meat by a sort of lottery or raffle. But arrows were also used for divination, i.e., for ascertaining lucky or unlucky moments, or learning the wishes of the heathen gods, as to whether men should undertake certain actions or not. All superstitions are condemned.

796. We are asked to obey the commands of God (which are always reasonable), instead of following superstitions (which are irrational), or seeking undue stimulation in intoxicants or undue advantage in gambling. To some there may be temporary excitement or pleasure in these, but that is not the way either of prosperity or piety.

797. Cf. v. 70. Both the worldly and the spiritual aspects of loss are pointed out. Can God's Message do more ?

For God loveth those
Who do good.⁷⁹⁸

SECTION 13.

97.  ye who believe !

God doth but make a trial of you
In a little matter
Of game well within reach
Of your hands and your lances,
That He may test⁷⁹⁹
Who feareth Him unseen :
Any who transgress
Thereafter, will have
A grievous penalty.

98. O ye who believe !

Kill not game
While in the Sacred
Precincts or in pilgrim garb.⁸⁰⁰
If any of you doth so
Intentionally, the compensation
Is an offering, brought
To the Ka'ba, of a domestic animal
Equivalent to the one he killed,⁸⁰¹

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ٥

۹۷-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَيَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ اللَّهُ
بَشْيٍ مِّنَ الصَّيْدِ تَنَالُهُ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَ
رِمَاحُكُمْ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَخَافُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ
فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ
فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

۹۸-يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ
وَأَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ
وَمَن قَتَلَهُ مِنْكُمْ مُّتَعَمِّدًا
فِيْزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ

798. There is a subtle symphony in what appears at first sight to be a triple repetition. The relation of such simple regulations as those of food, or game, or the reverence due to a sacred place or sacred institution, has to be explained *vis-a-vis* man's higher duties. Baidhāwī is right in classifying such duties under three heads : those due to God, those due from a man to himself (his self-respect), and those due to other creatures of God. Or perhaps all duties have this threefold aspect. The first may be called Believing or Faith ; the second, Guarding ourselves from evil, or Conscience ; and the third, doing good or Righteousness. But the simplest physical rules, *e.g.*, those about eating, cleanliness, etc., if they are good, refer also to the higher aspects. If we eat bad food, we hurt ourselves, we cause offence to our neighbours, and we disobey God. If we have faith and righteousness, are we likely to be wanting in conscience ? If we have conscience and faith, are we likely to fail in righteousness ? If we have conscience and righteousness, what can be their foundation but faith ? All three manifest themselves in a willing obedience to God, and love for Him. We realise His love in loving and doing good to His creatures, and our love for Him is meaningless without such good.

799. Literally, " know ". Cf. iii, 166, and iii, 154, n. 467. Game is forbidden in the Sacred Precincts. If we deliberately break that injunction, we have no faith and reverence.

800. See v. 2, and n. 684. The pilgrim garb, *Ihrām*, has been explained in n. 212, ii, 196.

801. For an inadvertent breach of the game rule there is apparently no penalty. Intentional breach will be prevented, if possible, by previous action. If in some case the preventive action is not effective, the penalty is prescribed. The penalty is in three alternatives : an equivalent animal should be brought to the Ka'ba for sacrifice ; if so, the meat would be distributed to the poor ; or the poor must be fed, with grain or money, according to the value of the animal if one had been sacrificed ; or the offender must fast as many days as the number of the poor who would have been fed under the second alternative. Probably the last alternative would only be open if the offender is too poor to afford the first or second, but on this point Commentators are not agreed. The " equivalent animal " in the first alternative would be a domestic animal of similar value or weight in meat or of similar shape (*e.g.*, goat to antelope), as adjudged by two just men on the spot.

The alternatives about the penalty and its remission (" God forgives what is past ") or exaction explain the last two lines of the verse : being " Exalted and Lord of Retribution ", God can remit or regulate according to His just laws.

As adjudged by two just men
Among you ; or by way
Of atonement, the feeding
Of the indigent ; or its
Equivalent in fasts : that he
May taste of the penalty
Of his deed. God
Forgives what is past :
For repetition God will
Exact from him the penalty.
For God is Exalted,
And Lord of Retribution.

99. Lawful to you is the pursuit ⁸⁰²
Of water-game and its use
For food,—for the benefit
Of yourselves and those who
Travel ; but forbidden
Is the pursuit of land-game ;—
As long as ye are
In the Sacred Precincts
Or in pilgrim garb.
And fear God, to Whom
Ye shall be gathered back.

100. God made the Ka'ba,
The Sacred House, an asylum
Of security for men, as
Also the Sacred Months, ⁸⁰³
The animals for offerings,
And the garlands that mark them: ⁸⁰⁴
That ye may know
That God hath knowledge
Of what is in the heavens
And on earth and that God
Is well acquainted
With all things. ⁸⁰⁵

101. Know ye that God
Is strict in punishment

يَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ هَدْيًا بَالِغَ
الْكَعْبَةِ أَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ
أَوْ عَدْلٌ ذَٰلِكَ صِيَامًا لِّذَوِّ وَقْ وَبَالَ
أَمْرِ عَقَّا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفٌ
وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ ۝

٩٩- أَحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ
مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِلْسَيَّارَةِ
وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ
مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ۝

١٠٠- جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ
الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَامًا لِلنَّاسِ
وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ
وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقُلَادَ
ذَٰلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝
١٠١- إِعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

802. *Water-game* : i.e., game found in water, e.g., water-fowl, fish, etc. "Water" includes sea, river, lake, pond, etc.

803. The Sacred or Prohibited Months are explained in n. 209, ii. 194, and n. 687, v. 3.

804. See v. 3 and n. 688.

805. All sorts of people from all parts of the earth gather during the Pilgrimage. They must not think that they are strangers, that nobody knows them, and that they may behave as they like. It is the House of God, and He has supreme knowledge of all things, of all thoughts, and all motives. As the next verse says, while He is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful, He is also strict in enforcing respect for His ordinances.

And that God is
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

102. The Apostle's duty is
But to proclaim (the Message).
But God knoweth all
That ye reveal and ye conceal.

103. Say : " Not equal are things
That are bad and things
That are good, even though
The abundance of the bad
May dazzle thee ;⁸⁰⁶
So fear God, O ye
That understand ;
That (so) ye may prosper."

SECTION 14.

104. ﴿٢٥﴾ ye who believe !
Ask not questions
About things which,
If made plain to you,
May cause you trouble.
But if ye ask about things
When the Qur-an is being
Revealed, they will be
Made plain to you, ⁸⁰⁷
God will forgive those :
For God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Forbearing.

105. Some people before you
Did ask such questions, ⁸⁰⁸

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

١٠٢- مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ مُنْجِبُونَ ۝

١٠٣- قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ
وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلَحُونَ ۝

١٠٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا
عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ إِن تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ تَسْأَلُكُمْ
وَلَإِنْ تَسْأَلُوا
عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنْزَلُ الْقُرْآنُ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ
عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ۝

١٠٥- قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ

806. Cf. ii. 204. People often judge by quantity rather than quality. They are dazzled by numbers : their hearts are captured by what they see everywhere around them. But the man of understanding and discrimination judges by a different standard. He knows that good and bad things are not to be lumped together, and carefully chooses the best, which may be the scarcest, and avoids the bad, though evil may meet him at every step.

807. Many secrets are wisely hidden from us. If the future were known to us, we need not necessarily be happy. In many cases we should be miserable. If the inner meaning of some of the things we see before our eyes were disclosed to us, it might cause a lot of mischief. God's Message, in so far as it is necessary for shaping our conduct, is plain and open to us. But there are many things too deep for us to understand, either individually or collectively. It would be foolish to pry into them, as some foolish people tried to do in the time of the Apostle. Where a matter is mentioned in the Qur-an, we can reverently ask for its meaning. That is not forbidden. But we should never pass the bounds of (1) our own capacity to understand, (2) the time and occasion when we ask questions, and (3) the part of the Universal Plan which it is God's purpose to reveal to us.

808. For example, the merely fractious questions asked of Moses by the Jews : ii. 68-71. They showed that they had no faith. When foolish questions are asked, and there is no answer, it also shakes the faith of the foolish ones.

And on that account
Lost their faith.

106. It was not God
Who instituted (superstitions⁸⁰⁹
Like those of) a slit-ear
She-camel, or a she-camel
Let loose for free pasture,
Or idol sacrifices for
Twin-births in animals,
Or stallion-camels
Freed from work :
It is blasphemers
Who Invent a lie
Against God ; but most
Of them lack wisdom.

107. When it is said to them :
" Come to what God
Hath revealed ; come
To the Apostle " :
They say : " Enough for us⁸¹⁰
Are the ways we found
Our fathers following."
What ! even though their fathers
Were void of knowledge
And guidance ?

108. O ye who believe !
Guard your own souls :
If ye follow (right) guidance,
No hurt can come to you
From those who stray.
The goal of you all
Is to God : it is He
That will show you
The truth of all
That ye do.⁸¹¹

ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوا بِهَا كَافِرِينَ ○

١٠٦- مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَحِيرَةٍ

وَلَا سَائِبَةٍ

وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ

وَلَا حَامٍ

وَلَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

يَقْتُرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ

وَكَثُرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ○

١٠٧- وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى مَا أَنْزَلَ

اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ

قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا

أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا

وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ○

١٠٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ

أَنْفُسُكُمْ

لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

إِلَى اللَّهِ مُرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا

فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ○

809. A number of Arab Pagan superstitions are referred to. The Pagan mind, not understanding the hidden secrets of nature, attributed certain phenomena to divine anger and were assailed by superstitious fears which haunted their lives. If a she-camel or other female domestic animal had a large number of young, she (or one of her offspring) had her ear slit and she was dedicated to a god : such an animal was a *baḥīra*. On return in safety from a journey, or on recovery from an illness a she-camel was similarly dedicated and let loose for free pasture : she was called a *sāiba*. Where an animal bore twins, certain sacrifices or dedications were made to idols : an animal so dedicated was a *waṣīla*. A stallion-camel dedicated to the gods by certain rites was a *ḥām*. The particular examples lead to the general truth : that superstition is due to ignorance, and is degrading to men and dishonouring to God.

810. Cf. ii. 170. Where an apostle of Truth comes to teach us the better way, it is foolish to say : "What our ancestors did is good enough for us."

811. Cf. v. 51. There the unity of God will reconcile different views. The unity of the one Judge will do perfect justice to each one's conduct, however different in form it may have appeared in this world.

109. **○** ye who believe !
 When death approaches
 Any of you, (take) witnesses
 Among yourselves when making
 Bequests,—two just men
 Of your own (brotherhood)
 Or others from outside
 If ye are journeying
 Through the earth,
 And the chance of death
 Befalls you (thus).
 If ye doubt (their truth),
 Detain them both
 After prayer, and let them both
 Swear by God :
 " We wish not in this
 For any worldly gain,
 Even though the (beneficiary)
 Be our near relation :
 We shall hide not
 The evidence before God :
 If we do, then behold !
 The sin be upon us ! " ⁸¹²

110. But if it gets known
 That these two were guilty
 Of the sin (of perjury),
 Let two others stand forth
 In their places,—nearest
 In kin from among those
 Who claim a lawful right : ⁸¹³
 Let them swear by God :
 " We affirm that our witness
 Is truer than that
 Of those two, and that we
 Have not trespassed (beyond
 The truth) : if we did,
 Behold ! the wrong be
 Upon us ! "

111. That is most suitable :
 That they may give the evidence

١٠٩- يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا شَهِدُوْا لِّبَيْنِكُمْ
 اِذَا حَضَرَ اَحَدُكُمْ الْمَوْتُ
 حِيْنَ الْوَصِيَّةِ اِثْنَيْنِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ
 اَوْ اٰخَرَيْنِ مِّنْ غَيْرِكُمْ
 اِنْ اَنْتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ
 فَاصَابَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةُ الْمَوْتِ
 تَحْسِبُوْنَهُمَا مِّنْ بَعْدِ الصَّلٰوةِ
 فَيُقْسِمْنَ بِاللّٰهِ
 اِنْ اُرْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِيْ بِهٖ ثَمَنًا
 وَّلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبٰى
 وَلَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ اللّٰهِ
 اِنَّا اِذَا لَمِنَ الْاٰثِمِيْنَ ۝

١١٠- فَاِنْ عَثَرَ عَلٰى اَنَّهُمَا اسْتَحَقَّا اِثْمًا
 فَاٰخَرَيْنِ يَقُوْمْنَ مَّقَامَهُمَا
 مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اسْتَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْاَوَّلٰىنِ
 فَيُقْسِمْنَ بِاللّٰهِ
 لَشَهَادَتُنَا اَحَقُّ مِّنْ شَهَادَتِهِمَا
 وَمَا عَصَيْنَا
 اِنَّا اِذَا لَمِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝

١١١- ذٰلِكَ اَدْنٰى اَنْ يَّاتُوْا بِالْشَّهَادَةِ

812. Ordinarily this oath should be decisive, and the matter must rest here. But if it gets known that the oath was false, other evidence may be taken as in the next verse.

813. *Istahqqa*—Deserved having something (good or evil) attributed to one; hence the alternative meanings: (1) committed or was guilty of a sin; (2) had or claimed a lawful right (to property). The procedure was followed in an actual case in the Apostle's life-time. A man from Medina died abroad, having made over his goods to two friends, to be delivered to his designated heirs in Medina. They, however, kept back a valuable silver cup. When this was found out, oaths were taken from those who knew, and justice was done.

In its true nature and shape,
Or else they would fear
That other oaths would be
Taken after their oaths.
But fear God, and listen
(To His counsel) : for God
Guideth not a rebellious people.

عَلَى وَجْهِهَا أَوْ يَخَافُوا أَنْ تُرَدَّ آيَٰتُهُ
بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَسْمِعُوا
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَٰسِقِينَ ٥

C. 75.—Jesus did feed his disciples by miracle,
(v. 112-123.) But he claimed not divinity : he was
A true servant of God, to Whom doth belong
The dominion of the heavens and the earth :
Glory and power are His, and His alone.

SECTION 15.

112. One day will God
Gather the apostles together,
And ask : " What was
The response ye received
(From men to your teaching) ?"
They will say : " We
Have no knowledge : it is Thou
Who knowest in full
All that is hidden."⁸¹⁴

١١٢-يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ
فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أَجَبْتُمُ
قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ٥

113. When will God say :
" O Jesus the son of Mary !
Recount My favour ⁸¹⁵
To thee and to thy mother.
Behold ! I strengthened thee ⁸¹⁶
With the holy spirit,
So that thou didst speak
To the people in childhood
And in maturity.⁸¹⁷
Behold ! I taught thee
The Book and Wisdom,⁸¹⁸
The Law and the Gospel,
And behold ! thou makest⁸¹⁹
Out of clay, as it were,

١١٣-إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَتِكَ
إِذْ أَيَّدْتُكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ
تَكَلَّمَ النَّاسُ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا
وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ
وَإِذْ مَخْلُقٌ مِنَ الطِّينِ

814. A scene of the Day of Reckoning is put before us in graphic words, showing the responsibility and the limitations of the men of God, sent to preach God's Message to men, with special reference to the Message of Jesus. The Messengers are sent to preach the Truth. What fantastic forms the Message takes in men's reactions to it was beyond their knowledge at the time, and beyond their responsibility.

815. In a solemn scene before the Court of Judgment, Jesus is asked to recount all the mercies and favours shown to him, so that his followers should become ashamed of their ingratitude in corrupting that Message, when they could have done so much in profiting by its purity and spiritual truth. This argument continues to the end of the Sura.

816. Cf. ii 87, and iii. 62, n. 401.

817. Cf. iii. 46, and n. 388.

818. Cf. iii. 48.

819. Cf. iii. 49, and n. 390.

The figure of a bird,
By My leave,
And thou breakest into it,
And it becometh a bird
By My leave,
And thou healest those
Born blind, and the lepers,
By My leave.
And behold ! thou
Bringest forth the dead
• By My leave.⁸²⁰
And behold ! I did
Restrain the Children of Israel
From (violence to) thee⁸²¹
When thou didst show them
The Clear Signs,
And the unbelievers among them
Said: ' This is nothing
But evident magic'.⁸²²

114. " And behold ! I inspired
The Disciples to have faith
In Me and Mine Apostle :
They said, ' We have faith,
And do thou⁸²³ bear witness
That we bow to God
As Muslims'.⁸²⁴

115. Behold ! the Disciples said :
" O Jesus the son of Mary !
Can thy Lord send down to us
A Table set (with viands)

كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي
فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا
فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي
وَتُشْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي
وَأَذْ تَخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِي
وَأَذْ كَفَقْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ عَنْكَ
إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ
إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ○

١١٤- وَأَذْ أَوْجَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ
أَنْ أَمْنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي
قَالُوا أَمَنَّا
وَاشْهَدُ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ○

١١٥- إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَعْيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ
هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً

820. Note how the words " by My leave " are repeated with each miracle to emphasize the fact that they arose, not out of the power or will of Jesus, but by the leave and will and power of God, who is supreme over Jesus as He is over all other mortals.

821. The Jews were seeking to take the life of Jesus long before their final attempt to crucify him : see Luke, iv. 28-29. Their attempt to crucify him was also foiled, according to the teaching we have received : Q. iv. 157.

822. According to Luke (xi. 15), when Christ performed the miracle of casting out devils, the Jews said he did it through the chief of the devils, i.e., they accused him of black magic. No such miracle of casting out devils is mentioned in the Qur-an, nor are we asked to believe in demoniacal possession of that kind. But Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad were all accused of magic and sorcery, by those who could find no other explanation of God's power,

823. " Thou " refers to Jesus, who is being addressed by his Disciples. Cf. iii. 52.

824. Before or after Muhammad's life on this earth, all who bowed to God's Will were Muslims, and their religion is Islam. Cf. iii. 52, and n. 392.

From heaven ? " Said Jesus :
" Fear God, if ye have faith."⁸²⁵

116. They said : " We only wish
To eat thereof and satisfy
Our hearts, and to know
That thou hast indeed
Told us the truth ; and
That we ourselves may be
Witnesses to the miracle."

117. Said Jesus the son of Mary :
" O God our Lord !
Send us from heaven
A Table set (with viands),⁸²⁶
That there may be for us—
For the first and the last of us—
A solemn festival
And a Sign from Thee ;
And provide for our sustenance,⁸²⁷
For Thou art the best
Sustainer (of our needs)."

118. God said : " I will
Send it down unto you :
But if any of you
After that resisteth faith,
I will punish him
With a penalty such
As I have not inflicted
On any one among

مِنْ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

١١٦- قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَ
تَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُنَا
وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا
الْح. وَكَوْنُوا عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ○

١١٧- قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا
أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا
وَأَيَّةً مِنْكَ
وَازْرُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ○

١١٨- قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مُنْزِلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ
فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ
فَأَنِّي أَعَدُّ لَهُ عَذَابًا
لَا أَعَدُّ لَهُ أَحَدًا مِنَ

825. The request of the Disciples savours a little of (1) want of faith, (2) too much attention to physical food, and (3) a childish desire for miracles or Signs. All these three can be proved from the Canonical Gospels. (1) Simon Peter, quite early in the story, asked Jesus to depart from him, as he (Simon) was a sinful man (Luke, v. 8). The same Peter afterwards denied his Master several times shamelessly when the Master was in the power of his enemies. And one of the Disciples (Judas) actually betrayed Jesus. (2) Even in the Canonical Gospels, so many of the miracles are concerned with food and drink ; e.g., the turning of the water into wine (John, ii. 1-11) ; the conversion of five loaves and two small fishes into food for 5,000 men (John, vi. 5-13), this being the *only* miracle recorded in all the four Gospels ; the miraculous number of fishes caught for food (Luke, v. 4-11) ; the cursing of the fig tree because it had no fruit (Matt. xxi. 18-19) ; the allegory of eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood (John, vi. 53-57). (3) Because the Samaritans would not receive Jesus into their village, the Disciples James and John wanted a fire to come down from heaven and consume them (Luke, ix. 54).

826. The words of the Prayer seem to suggest the Last Supper. Cf. also the vision of Peter in " The Acts of the Apostles ", x. 9-16.

827. As in Islam, so in Christ's Prayer, sustenance should be taken for both physical and spiritual strength, especially the latter. " Give us this day our daily bread " seems the rendering of a literalist whose attention was fixed too much on bread.

All the peoples."⁸²⁸

SECTION 16.

119. And behold ! God will say :
 " O Jesus the son of Mary !
 Didst thou say unto men,
 ' Worship me and my mother
 As gods in derogation of God ?'
 He will say : " Glory to Thee !
 Never could I say
 What I had no right
 (To say). Had I said
 Such a thing, Thou wouldst
 Indeed have known it.
 Thou knowest what is
 In my heart, though I
 Know not what is
 In Thine. For Thou
 Knowest in full
 All that is hidden."⁸²⁹

120. " Never said I to them
 Aught except what Thou
 Didst command me
 To say, to wit, ' Worship
 God, my Lord and your Lord';⁸³⁰
 And I was a witness
 Over them whilst I dwelt
 Amongst them ; when thou
 Didst take me up
 Thou wast the Watcher
 Over them, and Thou
 Art a witness to all things."⁸³¹

121. " If Thou dost punish them,
 They are Thy servants :

الْعَالَمِينَ ٥

١١٩- وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
 ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي
 إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
 قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ
 مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ
 إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ
 تَعَلَّمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي
 وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ
 إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ٥

١٢٠- مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ
 أَنْ أَعْبُدُ وَاللَّهُ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ
 وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا
 مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي
 كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ
 وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ٥

١٢١- إِنْ نَعَذِّبُهُمْ فَلَهُمْ عِبَادٌكَ

828. A forceful allegory. It is a wicked generation that asks for Signs and Miracles. Usually they are not vouchsafed. But where they are, the responsibility of those who ask for them is increased. If, after that, they reject faith, invent lies, and go after false gods or false ideals, their penalty will be worse than that of other people. How this works out practically among those who call themselves Christians is exemplified in such books as the late Mr. W. T. Stead's "If Christ Came to Chicago?"

829. Jesus disclaims here any knowledge of the sort of things that are attributed to him by those who take his name. The worship of Mary, though repudiated by the Protestants, was widely spread in the earlier Churches, both in the East and the West.

830. Cf. v. 75, and n. 782.

831. Jesus here acknowledges that he was mortal, and that his knowledge was limited like that of a mortal.

If Thou dost forgive them,
Thou art the Exalted in power,
The Wise.⁸³²

122. God will say : " This is
A day on which
The truthful will profit
From their truth : theirs
Are Gardens, with rivers
Flowing beneath,—their eternal
Home : God well-pleased
With them, and they with God :
That is the great Salvation,⁸³³
(The fulfilment of all desires).

123. To God doth belong the dominion
Of the heavens and the earth,
And all that is therein,
And it is He who hath power
Over all things.

وَأِنْ تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ
فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

۱۲۲- قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ
صُدُقُهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ
ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

۱۲۳- لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَا فِيهِنَّ
وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝



832. A Master can justly punish His servants for disobedience; no one can say Him nay, for He is high above all. But if He chooses to forgive, He in His wisdom sees things that we mortals cannot see. This is the limit of intercession that men of God can make on behalf of sinners.

833. *Fauz*=Felicity, happiness, achievement, salvation, the attainment or fulfilment of desires. What a beautiful definition of salvation or the end of life!—that we should win God's good pleasure and that we should reach the stage at which His good pleasure is all-in-all to us.

APPENDIX II.

On the *Taurāt* (see v. 47, n. 753).

The *Taurāt* is frequently referred to in the Qur-ān. It is well to have clear ideas as to what it exactly means. Vaguely we may say that it was the Jewish Scripture. It is mentioned with honour as having been, in its purity, a true revelation from God.

To translate it by the words "The Old Testament" is obviously wrong. The "Old Testament" is a Christian term, applied to a body of old Jewish records. The Protestants and the Roman Catholics are not agreed precisely as to the number of records to be included in the canon of the "Old Testament." They use the term in contradistinction to the "New Testament," whose composition we shall discuss in Appendix III.

Nor is it correct to translate *Taurāt* as the "Pentateuch," a Greek term meaning the "Five Books." These are the first five books of the Old Testament, known as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. They contain a semi-historical and legendary narrative of the history of the world from the Creation to the time of the arrival of the Jews in the Promised Land. There are in them some beautiful idylls but there are also stories of incest, fraud, cruelty, and treachery, not always disapproved. A great part of the Mosaic Law is embodied in this narrative. The books are traditionally ascribed to Moses, but it is certain that they were not written by Moses or in an age either contemporary with Moses or within an appreciable distance of time from Moses. They were in their present form probably compiled sometime after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity. The decree of Cyrus permitting such return was in 536 B.C. Some books now included in the Old Testament, such as Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were admittedly written after the return from the captivity, Malachi being as late as 420-397 B.C. The compilers of the Pentateuch of course used some ancient material: some of that material is actually named. Egyptian and Chaldean terms are relics of local colour and contemporary documents.

But there are some ludicrous slips, which show that the compilers did not always understand their material. Modern criticism distinguishes two distinct sources among the documents of different dates used by the editors. For the sake of brevity and convenience they may be called (a) Jehovistic, and (b) Elohist. Then there are later miscellaneous interpolations. They sometimes overlap and sometimes contradict each other.

Logically speaking, the Book of Joshua, which describes the entry into the Promised Land, should be bracketed with the Pentateuch, and many writers speak of the six books together as the Hexateuch (Greek term for Six Books).

The Apocrypha contain certain Books which are not admitted as Canonical in the English Bible. But the early Christians received them as part of the Jewish Scriptures, and the Council of Trent (A.D. 1545-1563) seems to have recognised the

greater part of them as Canonical. The statement in 2 Esdras (about the first century A.D.) that the law was burnt and Ezra (say, about 458-457 B.C.) was inspired to rewrite it, is probably true as to the historical fact that the law was lost, and that what we have now is no earlier than the time of Ezra, and some of it a good deal later.

So far we have spoken of the Christian view of the Old Testament. What is the Jewish view? The Jews divide their Scripture into three parts: (1) the Law (*Torah*), (2) the Prophets (*Nebim*), and (3) the Writings (*Kethubim*). The corresponding Arabic words would be: (1) *Taurāt*, (2) *Nabīyīn*, and (3) *Kutub*. This division was probably current in the time of Jesus. In Luke xxiv. 44 Jesus refers to the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. In other places (e.g., Matt. vii. 12) Jesus refers to the Law and the Prophets as summing up the whole Scripture. In the Old Testament Book II. Chronicles xxxiv. 30, the reference to the Book of the Covenant must be to the *Torah* or the original Law. This is interesting, as the Qur-ān frequently refers to the Covenant with reference to the Jews. The modern Christian terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament" are substitutes for the older terms "Old Covenant" and "New Covenant." The Samaritans, who claim to be the real Children of Israel and disavow the Jews as schismatics from their Law of Moses, only recognise the Pentateuch, of which they have their own version slightly different from that in the Old Testament.

The view of the school of Higher Criticism is radically destructive. According to Renan it is doubtful whether Moses was not a myth. Two versions of Sacred History existed, different in language, style, and spirit, and they were combined together into a narrative in the reign of Hezekiah (B.C. 727-697). This forms the greater part of the Pentateuch as it exists to-day, excluding the greater part of Deuteronomy and Leviticus. In the reign of Josiah about 622 B.C., certain priests and scribes (with Jeremiah the prophet) promulgated a new code, pretending that they had found it in the Temple (II. Kings, xxii. 8). This Law (*Torah* = *Taurāt*) was the basis of Judaism, the new religion then founded in Palestine. This was further completed by the sacerdotal and Levitical *Torah*, compiled under the inspiration of Ezekiel, say, about 575 B.C., and contained mainly in the Book of Leviticus, with scattered fragments in Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua. We are entitled to accept the general results of a scientific examination of documents, probabilities, and dates, even though we reject the premise which we believe to be false, *viz.*, that God does not send inspired Books through inspired Prophets. We believe that Moses existed; that he was an inspired man of God; that he gave a message which was afterwards distorted or lost; that attempts were made by Israel at various times to reconstruct that message; and that the *Taurāt* as we have it is (in view of the statement in 2 Esdras) no earlier than the middle of the fifth century B.C.

The primitive *Torah* must have been in old Hebrew, but there is no Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament which can be dated with certainty earlier than 916 A.D. Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language with the Jews during or after the Captivity, and by the time we come to the period of Jesus, most cultivated Hebrews used the Greek language, and others used Aramaic (including Syriac and Chaldee), Latin, or local dialects. There were also Arabic versions. For historical purposes

the most important versions were the Greek version, known as the Septuagint, and the Latin version, known as the Vulgate. The Septuagint was supposed to have been prepared by 70 or 72 Jews (Latin, septuaginta=seventy) working independently and at different times, the earliest portion dating from about 284 B.C. This version was used by the Jews of Alexandria and the Hellenized Jews who were spread over all parts of the Roman Empire. The Vulgate was a Latin translation made by the celebrated Father of the Christian Church, St. Jerome, from Hebrew, early in the fifth century A.D., superseding the older Latin versions. Neither the Septuagint nor the Vulgate have an absolutely fixed or certain text. The present standard text of the Vulgate as accepted by the Roman Catholic Church was issued by Pope Clement VIII (A.D. 1592-1605).

It will be seen therefore that there is no standard text of the Old Testament in its Hebrew form. The versions differ from each other frequently in minor particulars and sometimes in important particulars. The Pentateuch itself is only a small portion of the Old Testament. It is in narrative form, and includes the laws and regulations associated with the name of Moses, but probably compiled and edited from older sources by Ezra (or Esdras; Arabic, 'Uzair) in the 5th century B.C. As Renan remarks in the preface to his *History of the People of Israel*, the "definite constitution of Judaism" may be dated only from the time of Ezra. The very early Christians were divided into two parties. One was a Judaizing party, which wished to remain in adherence to the Jewish laws and customs while recognising the mission of Jesus. The other, led by Paul, broke away from Jewish customs and traditions. Ultimately Pauline Christianity won. But both parties recognised the Old Testament in its present form (in one or another of its varying versions) as Scripture. It was the merit of Islam that it pointed out that as scripture it was of no value, although it recognised Moses as an inspired apostle and his original Law as having validity in his period until it was superseded. In its criticism of the Jewish position it said in effect: "You have lost your original Law; even what you have now as its substitute, you do not honestly follow; is it not better, now that an inspired Teacher is living among you, that you should follow him rather than quibble over uncertain texts?"

But the Jews in the Apostle's time (and since) went a great deal by the Talmud, or a body of oral exposition, reduced to writing in different Schools of doctors and learned men. "Talmud" in Hebrew is connected with the Arabic root in *Talmīz*, "disciple" or "student." The Talmudists took the divergent texts of the Old Testament and in interpreting them by a mass of traditional commentary and legendary lore, evolved a standard body of teaching. The Talmudists are of special interest to us, as, in the sixth century A.D., just before the preaching of Islam, they evolved the Massorah, which may be regarded as the body of authoritative Jewish Ḥadīth, to which references are to be found in passages addressed to the Jews in the Qur-ān.

The first part of the Talmud is called the *Mishna*,—a collection of traditions and decisions prepared by the Rabbi Judah about 150 A.D. He summed up the results [of a great mass of previous rabbinical writings. The *Mishna* is the "Second Law":

Cf. the Arabic *Thān-in*=second. "It bound heavy burdens grievous to be borne, and laid them on men's shoulders" : Matt. xxiii. 4.

There were also many Targums or paraphrases of the Law among the Jews. "Targum" is connected in root with the Arabic word *Tarjama*, "he translated." There were many Targums, mostly in Aramaic, and they constituted the teaching of the Law to the masses of the Jewish people.

The correct translation of the *Taurāt* is therefore "The Law." In its original form it was promulgated by Moses, and is recognised in Islam as having been an inspired Book. But it was lost before Islam was preached. What passed as "The Law" with the Jews in the Apostle's time was the mass of traditional writing which I have tried to review in this Appendix.

Authorities : *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Bible" ; *Helps to the Study of the Bible*, Oxford University Press ; A. F. Kirkpatrick, *Divine Library of the Old Testament* ; C. E. Hammond, *Outlines of Textual Criticism* ; E. Renan, *History of Israel* ; G. F. Moore, *Literature of the Old Testament*, and the bibliography therein (Home University Library) ; Sir Frederic Kenyon, *The Story of the Bible*, 1936.

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APPENDIX III.

On the *Injil* (see v. 49, n. 757)

Just as the *Taurāt* is not the Old Testament, or the Pentateuch, as now received by the Jews and Christians, so the *Injil* mentioned in the Qur-ān is certainly not the New Testament, and it is not the four Gospels as now received by the Christian Church, but an original Gospel which was promulgated by Jesus, as the *Taurāt* was promulgated by Moses and the Qur-ān by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā.

The New Testament as now received consists of (a) four Gospels with varying contents (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John); and other miscellaneous matter; viz., (b) the Acts of the Apostles (probably written by Luke and purporting to describe the progress of the Christian Church under St. Peter and St. Paul from the supposed Crucifixion of Jesus to about 61 A.D.); (c) twenty-one Letters or Epistles (the majority written by St. Paul to various churches or individuals, but a few written by other Disciples, and of a general nature); and (d) the Book of Revelation or Apocalypse (ascribed to St. John, and containing mystic visions and prophecies, of which it is difficult to understand the meaning).

As Prof. F. C. Burkitt remarks (*Canon of the New Testament*), it is an odd miscellany. "The four biographies of Jesus Christ are not all independent of each other, and neither of them was intended by its writer to form one of a quartette. But they are all put side by side, unharmonised, one of them being actually imperfect at the end, and one being only the first volume of a larger work." All this body of unmethodical literature was casual in its nature. No wonder, because the early Christians expected the end of the world very soon. The four canonical Gospels were only four out of many, and some others besides the four have survived. Each writer just wrote down some odd sayings of the Master that he recollected. Among the miracles described there is only one which is described in all the four Gospels, and others were described, and believed in, in other Gospels, which are not mentioned in any of the four canonical Gospels. Some of the Epistles contain expositions of doctrine, but this has been interpreted differently by different Churches. There must have been hundreds of such Epistles, and not all the Epistles now received as canonical were always so received or intended to be so received. The Apocalypse also was not the only one in the field. There were others. They were prophecies of "things which must shortly come to pass"; they could not have been meant for long preservation, "for the time is at hand."

When were these four Gospels written? By the end of the second century A.D. they were in existence, but it does not follow that they had been selected by that date to form a canon. They were merely pious productions comparable to Dean Farrar's *Life of Christ*. There were other Gospels besides. And further, the writers of two of them, Mark and Luke, were not among the Twelve Disciples "called" by Jesus. About the Gospel of St. John there is much controversy as to authorship, date, and even as to whether it was all written by one person. Clement of Rome (about 97 A.D.) and Polycarp (about 112 A.D.) quote sayings of Jesus in a form

different from those found in the present canonical Gospels. Polycarp (Epistle, vii) inveighs much against men "who prevent the sayings of the Lord to their own lusts," and he wants to turn "to the Word handed down to us from the beginning," thus referring to a Book (or a Tradition) much earlier than the four orthodox Gospels. An Epistle of St. Barnabas and an Apocalypse of St. Peter were recognised by Presbyter Clement of Alexandria (flourished about 180 A.D.). The Apocalypse of St. John, which is a part of the present Canon in the West, forms no part of the Peshitta (Syriac) version of the Eastern Christians, which was produced about 411-433 A.D. and which was used by the Nestorian Christians. It is probable that the Peshitta was the version (or an Arabic form of it) used by the Christians in Arabia in the time of the Apostle. The final form of the New Testament canon for the West was fixed in the fourth century A.D. (say, about 367 A.D.) by Athanasius and the Nicene creed. The beautiful Codex Sinaiticus which was acquired for the British Museum in 1934, and is one of the earliest complete manuscripts of the Bible, may be dated about the fourth century. It is written in the Greek language. Fragments of unknown Gospels have also been discovered, which do not agree with the received canonical Gospels.

The *Injil* (Greek, *Evangel*=Gospel) spoken of by the Qur-ān is not the New Testament. It is not the four Gospels now received as canonical. It is the single Gospel which, Islam teaches, was revealed to Jesus, and which he taught. Fragments of it survive in the received canonical Gospels and in some others, of which traces survive (e.g., the Gospel of Childhood or the Nativity, the Gospel of St. Barnabas, etc.). Muslims are therefore right in respecting the present Bible (New Testament and Old Testament), though they reject the peculiar doctrines taught by orthodox Christianity or Judaism. They claim to be in the true tradition of Abraham, and therefore all that is of value in the older revelations, it is claimed, is incorporated in the teaching of the Last of the Prophets.

In v. 85 we are told that nearest in love to the Believers among the People of the Book are the Christians. I do not agree that this does not apply to modern Christians "because they are practically atheists or freethinkers." I think that Christian thought (like the world's thought) has learnt a great deal from the protest of Islam against priest domination, class domination, and sectarianism, and its insistence on making this life pure and beautiful while we are in it. We must stretch a friendly hand to all who are sincere and in sympathy with our ideals.

Authorities: The first two mentioned for Appendix II, and in addition Prof. F. C. Burkitt, on the Canon of the New Testament, in *Religion*, June 1934, the Journal of Transactions of the Society for Promoting the Study of Religions; R. W. Mackay, *Rise and Progress of Christianity*; G. R. S. Mead, *The Gospel and the Gospels*; B. W. Bacon, *Making of the New Testament*, with its Bibliography; Sir Frederic Kenyon, *The Story of the Bible*; R. Hone, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, London 1820; H. I. Bell and T. C. Skeat, *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and other Christian Papyri*, published by the British Museum, 1935. See also chapter 15 of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, where the genesis of the early churches and sects in the Roman Empire is briefly reviewed.

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA VI (*An'ām*)

This is a Sūra of the late Meccan period. The greater part of it was revealed entire. Its place in the traditional order of arrangement is justified by logical considerations. We have already had the spiritual history of mankind, a discussion of the earlier revelations and how they were lost or corrupted, the regulations for the outer life of the new Community, and the points in which the Jews and Christians failed to maintain the central doctrine of Islam—the unity of God. The next step now taken is to expound this doctrine in relation to Pagan Arabia.

Summary.—The nature of God and the method by which He reveals Himself are first expounded, and the weakness of Paganism is exposed (vi. 1-30, and C. 76).

The emptiness of this world's life is contrasted with the evidences of God's wonderful handiwork in all Creation. It is He who holds the keys of the Unseen and the secrets of all that we see (vi. 31-60, and C. 77).

God's working in His world and His constant care and guidance should give a clue to His unity, as it did to Abraham when he argued with those who worshipped false gods (vi. 61-82, and C. 78).

The succession of prophets after Abraham kept God's truth alive, and led up to the Qur-ān. How can man fail to understand the majesty and goodness of God, when he contemplates God's nature and His Messages to mankind? (vi. 83-110, and C. 79).

The obstinate and the rebellious are deceived: they should be avoided. Though they turn for assistance to each other, they will receive due punishment (vi. 111-129, and C. 80).

God's decrees will come to pass, in spite of all the crimes and superstitions of the ungodly (vi. 130-150, and C. 81).

The better course is to follow the straight Way, the Way of God, as directed in the Qur-ān, with unity and the full dedication of our lives (vi. 151-165, and C. 82).

C. 76.—God did separate Light from Darkness ;

(vi. 1-30.) He reigns not only in heavens but also
On earth ; Mercy is His Law ;
To Him shall we all return
At the end of all things. How can we
Then depart from truth and forge lies
Against Him ? It is folly to say that there is
Nothing beyond this our present life.

Sūra VI.

An'am, or Cattle.

In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

1. Praise be to God,
Who created the heavens
And the earth,
And made the Darkness
And the Light.
Yet those who reject Faith
Hold (others) as equal⁸³⁴.
With their Guardian-Lord.⁸³⁵

2. He it is Who created⁸³⁶
You from clay, and then
Decreed a stated term⁸³⁷
(For you). And there is
In His Presence another
Determined term ; yet
Ye doubt within yourselves !

3. And He is God
In the heavens
And on earth.
He knoweth what ye
Hide, and what ye reveal,
And He knoweth
The (recompense) which
Ye earn (by your deeds).⁸³⁸



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

۱- اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ
الْاَرْضَ
وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمٰتِ وَالنُّوْرَ
ثُمَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُوْنَ

۲- هُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِيْنٍ
ثُمَّ قَضٰى اَجَلًا
وَاَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهٗ
ثُمَّ اَنْتُمْ تَمْتَرُوْنَ

۳- وَهُوَ اللّٰهُ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَفِي الْاَرْضِ
يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ
وَجَهْرَكُمْ
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُوْنَ

834. 'Adala has various meanings : (1) to hold something as equal to something else, as here ; to balance nicely ; (2) to deal justly, as between one party and another, xlii, 15 ; (3) to give compensation or reparation, or something as equivalent to something else, vi, 70 ; (4) to turn the balance the right way, to give a right disposition, to give a just bias or proportion, lxxii, 7 ; (5) to turn the balance the wrong way, to swerve, to show bias, iv, 135.

835. The argument is threefold : (1) God created everything you see and know : how can you then set up any of His own creatures as equal to Him ? (2) He is your own Guardian-Lord ; He cherishes and loves you ; how can you be so ungrateful as to run after something else ? (3) Darkness and Light are to help you to distinguish between the true from the false ; how then can you confound the true God with your false ideas and superstitions ? There may also be a repudiation of the Duality of old Persian theology ; Light and Darkness are not conflicting Powers ; they are both creatures of the one true God.

836. After the general argument, the argument comes to man personally. Can such a miserable creature, created from clay, put himself in opposition to his Creator ? And can man forget or doubt that he is here only for a short term of probation ? And then, after a period, comes the Day of Account before God.

837. This life is a period of probation. The other term leads up to judgment.

838. It is folly to suppose that God only reigns in the heavens. He also reigns on earth. He knows all our secret thoughts and motives, and the real worth of all that is behind what we can show. It is by our deeds that He judges us ; for our deeds, whether good or evil, we shall get due recompense in due time.

4. But never did a single
One of the Signs
Of their Lord reach them,
But they turned
Away therefrom.

5. And now they reject
The truth when it reaches
Them : but soon shall they
Learn the reality of what
They used to mock at.

6. See they not how many
Of those before them
We did destroy ?—⁸³⁹
Generations We had established
On the earth, in strength
Such as We have not given
To you—for whom
We poured out rain
From the skies in abundance,
And gave (fertile) streams
Flowing beneath their (feet) :
Yet for their sins
We destroyed them,
And raised in their wake
Fresh generations
(To succeed them).

7. If we had sent
Unto thee a written
(Message) on parchment,^{839-A}
So that they could
Touch it with their hands,
The Unbelievers would
Have been sure to say :
" This is nothing but

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ
رَبِّهِمْ

إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ○

هـ- فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ

فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبَاءُ

مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ○

و- أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ

مِنْ قَرْنٍ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ

مَا لَمْ يُمَكِّنْ لَكُمْ

وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِطْرًا

وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ

فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ

بِذُنُوبِهِمْ

وَأَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ ○

ز- وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَاهُ عَلَيْكَ كِتَابًا فِي قُرْطَابٍ

فَلَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيهِمْ

لِقَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا

839. Now comes the argument from history, looking backwards and forwards. If we are so short-sighted or arrogant as to suppose that we are firmly established on this earth, secure in our privileges, we are reminded of much greater nations in the past, who failed in their duty and were wiped out. In their fate we must read our own fate, if we fail likewise! But those without faith, instead of facing facts squarely " turn away therefrom."

839-A. *Qirṭās*, in the Apostle's life, could only mean " parchment," which was commonly used as writing material in Western Asia from the 2nd century B. C. The word was derived from the Greek, *Charles* (Cf. Latin, "*Charta*"). Paper, as we know it, made from rags, was first used by the Arabs after the conquest of Samarqand in 751 A.D. The Chinese had used it by the 2nd century B.C. The Arabs introduced it into Europe; it was used in Greece in the 11th or 12th century, and in Spain through Sicily in the 12th century. The papyrus, made from an Egyptian reed, was used in Egypt as early as 2500 B.C. It gave place to paper in Egypt in the 10th century.

Obvious magic! "840

8. They say: "Why is not
An angel sent down to him?"
If We did send down
An angel, the matter
Would be settled at once,
And no respite
Would be granted them.⁸⁴¹

9. If We had made it
An angel, We should
Have sent him as a man,
And We should certainly
Have caused them confusion
In a matter which they have
Already covered with confusion.⁸⁴²

10. Mocked were (many)
Apostles before thee;
But their scoffers
Were hemmed in
By the thing that they mocked.⁸⁴³

SECTION 2.

11. Say: "Travel through the earth
And see what was the end
Of those who rejected Truth."

12. Say: "To whom belongeth
All that is in the heavens

سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ٥

٨- وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ

وَلَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا مَلَكًا

لَقَضَى الْأَمْرَ

ثُمَّ لَا يُنْظَرُونَ ٥

٩- وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ مَلَكًا

لَجَعَلْنَاهُ رَجُلًا

وَلَكَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ

مَا يَكْفُشُونَ ٥

١٠- وَلَقَدْ اسْتَهْزَيْتُمْ بِرُسُلٍ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ

فَخَاقَ بِالْكَذِبِ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ

فَمَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ٥

١١- قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ انظُرُوا

كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ٥

١٢- قُلْ لِمَنْ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ

840. The materialists want to see actual physical material things before them, but if such a thing came from an unusual source or expressed things they cannot understand, they give it some name like magic, or superstition, or whatever name is in fashion, and they are not helped at all in attaining faith, because their " hearts are diseased " (ii. 10).

841. Cf. ii. 210. An angel is a heavenly being, a manifestation of God's glory, invisible to men who live gross material lives. Such men are given plenty of respite in which to turn in repentance to God and make themselves worthy of His light. But if their prayer to see an angel were granted, it would do them no good, for they would be destroyed as darkness is destroyed by light.

842. Supposing an angel should appear to their grosser senses, he could only do it in human form. In that case their present confused notions about spiritual life would be still more confounded. They would say: " We wanted to see an angel, and we have only seen a man! "

843. " The scoffers were mocked by the thing that they mocked " would express epigrammatically part of the sense, but not the whole. " Hemmed in " implies that the logic of events turned the tables, and as a man might be besieged and surrounded by an enemy in war, and would be forced to surrender, so these mockers will find that events would justify Truth, not them. The mockers of Jesus,—where were they when Titus destroyed Jerusalem? The mockers who drove out Muhammad from Mecca,—what was their plight when Muhammad came back in triumph and they sued for mercy,—and he gave it to them! According to the Latin proverb, Great is Truth, and must prevail.

And on earth ? " Say :
 " To God. He hath inscribed
 For Himself (the rule of) Mercy.⁸⁴⁴
 That He will gather you
 Together for the Day of Judgment,
 There is no doubt whatever.
 It is they who have lost
 Their own souls, that will
 Not believe.

13. "To Him belongeth all
 That dwelleth (or lurketh)⁸⁴⁵
 In the Night and the Day.
 For He is the One
 Who heareth and knoweth
 All things."⁸⁴⁶

14. Say : " Shall I take
 For my protector
 Any other than God,
 The Maker of the heavens
 And the earth ?
 And He it is that
 Feedeth but is not fed."⁸⁴⁷
 Say : " Nay ! but I am
 Commanded to be the first
 Of those who bow
 To God (in Islam),
 And be not thou
 Of the company of those
 Who join gods with God."

وَالْأَرْضِ قُلُوبُ اللَّهِ كَتَبَ
 عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ
 لِيَجْزِيَكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ
 فِيهِ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
 فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

۱۳- وَلَهُ مَا سَكَنَ
 فِي اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ
 وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

۱۴- قُلْ أَغَيِّرَ اللَّهُ أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا
 فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
 وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُهُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ
 قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ
 مَنْ أَسْلَمَ
 وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○

844. History, travel, human experience, all prove the Mercy of God and the law that without it those who reject Truth tend to lose their own souls and destroy themselves.

845. *Sakana*=(1) to dwell ; (2) to rest, to be still, to stop (moving), to lurk ; (3) to be quiescent, as a letter which is not moved with a vowel.

If we imagine Night and Day to be places, and each to have (dwelling in them) things that are open and things that are concealed, things that move and things that are still, things that are sounded and things that are quiescent, we get some idea of the imagery implied. The mystery of Time (which seems more abstract than Space) is thus explained and illustrated by the idea of Place or Space, which also is a notion and not a concrete thing. But He Who has control of all these things is the one true God.

846. Throughout this section we have a sort of implied dialogue, of which one part is understood from the other part, which is expressed. In verse 11, we might have an imaginary objector saying : " Why go back to the past ? " The answer is : " Well, travel through the world, and see whether it is not true that virtue and godliness exalt a nation, and the opposite are causes of ruin. Both the past and the present prove this." In verse 12, the objector may say : " But you speak of God's power ? " The man of God replies : " Yes, but Mercy is God's own attribute, and knowledge and wisdom beyond what man can conceive."

847. *Feedeth but is not fed* : true both literally and figuratively. To God we owe the satisfaction of all needs, but He is independent of all needs.

15. Say: "I would, if I
Disobeyed my Lord,
Indeed have fear
Of the Penalty
Of a Mighty Day.

16. "On that day, if the Penalty
Is averted from any,
It is due to God's Mercy;
And that would be (Salvation),
The obvious fulfilment
Of all desire.⁸⁴⁸

17. "If God touch thee
With affliction, none
Can remove it but He;
If He touch thee with happiness,
He hath power over all things.⁸⁴⁹

18. "He is the Irresistible, (watching)
From above over His worshippers;
And He is the Wise,
Acquainted with all things."

19. Say: "What thing is most
Weighty in evidence?"
Say: "God is witness
Between me and you;
This Qur-ān hath been
Revealed to me by inspiration,
That I may warn you
And all whom it reaches.
Can ye possibly bear witness
That besides God there is
Another God?" Say:
"Nay! I cannot bear witness!"
Say: "But in truth
He is the One God,

١٥- قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ

إِنْ عَصَيْتُ

رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ٥

١٦- مَنْ يُصْرِفْ عَنْهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ

فَقَدْ رَحِمَهُ

وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ ٥

١٧- وَإِنْ يَسْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بَضْرًا فَلَا كَاشِفَ

لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يَسْسَسْكَ بَخِيرًا

فَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٥

١٨- وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ

وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ٥

١٩- قُلْ أَمَى شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً

قُلْ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ

وَأَوْحَى إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ

لَأُنْذِرَكُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ أَشْكُمُ

لَتَشْهَدُنَّ أَنَّ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهَةً أُخْرَى

قُلْ لَا أَشْهَدُ

قُلْ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ

848. We continue the implied dialogue suggested in n. 846. In verse 14, the objector might say: "But we have other interests in life than religion and God." "No," says the man of God, "My Creator is the one and only Power whose protection I seek; and I strive to be first in the race." In verse 15, the objector suggests: "Enjoy the good things of this life; it is short." The answer is: "The Hereafter is more real to me, and promises the true fulfilment of all desire; happiness or affliction comes not from the fleeting pettinesses or illusions of this life, but from the power and wisdom of God." In verse 19, the objector makes his final splash: "What evidence is there for all this?" The reply is: "I know it is true, for God's voice is within me; and my living Teacher awakens that voice; and there is the Book of Inspiration. God is one; and there is none other besides."

849. The vulgar worship false gods out of fear that they would harm them or hope that they would confer some benefit on them. These false gods can do neither. All power, all goodness is in the hands of the One True God. All else is pretence or illusion.

And I truly am innocent
of (your blasphemy of) joining
Others with Him."

20. Those to whom
We have given the Book
Know this as they know⁸⁵⁰
Their own sons.
Those who have lost
Their own souls
• Refuse therefore to believe.

SECTION 3.

21. **W**ho doth more wrong
Than he who inventeth
A lie against God
Or rejecteth His Signs?
But verily the wrong-doers
Never shall prosper.
22. One day shall We gather
Them all together: We
Shall say to those
Who ascribed partners (to Us):
"Where are the partners
Whom ye (invented
And) talked about?"
23. There will then be (left)
No subterfuge for them⁸⁵¹
But to say: "By God
Our Lord, we were not
Those who joined gods
With God."
24. Behold! how they lie
Against their own souls!

وَأَشْرِكِي بِرَبِّيَ وَمِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ٥

٢٠- الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ
كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا
أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥

وَقَدْ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَقَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيَاتِ لَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَصْوَافًا ٥

٢١- وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ
كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ
إِنَّهُ لَا يَفْقَهُ الظَّالِمُونَ ٥

٢٢- وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا
ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا
أَيْنَ شُرَكَاءُكُمْ
الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ٥

٢٣- ثُمَّ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِتْنَتُهُمْ
إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا وَاللَّهُ رَبُّنَا
مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ ٥

٢٤- أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ كَذَبُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ

850. Cf. ii. 146 and n. 151. In both passages the pronoun translated "this" may mean "him" and refer to Muhammad the Apostle of God, as some Commentators think.

851. *Fitnat* has various meanings, from the root idea of "to try, to test, to tempt"; e.g., (1) a trial or temptation, as in ii. 102; (2) trouble, tumult, oppression, persecution, as in ii. 191, 193, 217; (3) discord, as in iii. 7; (4) subterfuge, an answer that amounts to a sedition, and excuse founded on a falsehood, as here. Other shades of meaning will be noticed as they occur.

Those who blasphemed God in imagining false gods will now see the vanity of their imaginations for themselves. What answer can they give now? In their perversity they will deny that they ever entertained the notion of false gods.

But the (lie) which they
Invented will leave them⁸⁵²
In the lurch.

25. Of them there are some
Who (pretend to) listen to thee ;
But We have thrown
Veils on their hearts,
So they understand it not,^{852-A}
And deafness in their ears ;
If they saw every one
Of the Signs, not they
Will believe in them ;
In so much that
When they come to thee,
They (but) dispute with thee ;
The Unbelievers say :
" These are nothing
But tales of the ancients."

26. Others they keep away from it,
And themselves they keep away ;
But they only destroy
Their own souls,
And they perceive it not.

27. If thou couldst but see
When they are confronted
With the Fire !
They will say :
" Would that we were
But sent back !
Then would we not reject
The Signs of our Lord,
But would be amongst those
Who believe !"

28. Yea, in their own (eyes)
Will become manifest
What before they concealed.
But if they were returned,
They would certainly relapse
To the things they were forbidden,

وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ۝

٢٥- وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ
وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً
أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا
وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كُلَّ آيَةٍ
لَا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا
حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءُوكَ يُجَادِلُونَكَ
يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝

٢٦- وَهُمْ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ
وَإِنْ يُهْلِكُونَ
إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ۝

٢٧- وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَى النَّارِ
قَالُوا يَلَيْتُنَا كَرَدُ
وَلَا تُكَدِّبُ
بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا
وَيَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

٢٨- بَلْ يَدْعُ إِلَهُمُ مَا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِنْ
قَبْلُ
وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ

852. The lies which they used to tell have now "wandered" from the channels which they use to occupy, and left the liars in the lurch. In denying the indubitable fact that they took false gods, they admit the falsity of their notions and thus are practically convicted out of their own mouths.

For they are indeed liars.⁸⁵³

29. And they (sometimes) say :

"There is nothing except
Our life on this earth,
And never shall we be
Raised up again."

30. If you couldst but see
When they are confronted
With their Lord !

He will say :

"Is not this the truth ?"

They will say :

"Yea, by our Lord !"

He will say :

"Taste ye then the Penalty,
Because ye rejected Faith."

وَإِلَهُكُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ۝

٢٩- وَقَالُوا إِن هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا

وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ۝

٣٠- وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَى رَبِّهِمْ

قَالَ الْبَئْسَ هَذَا بِالْحَقِّ

قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّنَا

قَالَ قَدْ وَقَفُوا الْعَذَابِ

بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ۝

C. 77.—The life of this world is but empty :

(vi. 31-60.) What is serious is the life hereafter.

The teacher of God's truth is not baulked

By frivolous objections or insults

Or persecution. The wicked will be

Cut off to the last remnant. God's wisdom

Pervades the whole of His Creation,

And in His hands are the keys of the Unseen,

And the secrets of all that we see.

SECTION 4.

31. ~~They~~ ^{It}roost indeed are they
Who treat it as a falsehood
That they must meet God,—
Until on a sudden
The hour is on them,
And they say: "Ah! woe
Unto us that we took
No thought of it";
For they bear their burdens⁸⁵⁴
On their backs.

٣١- قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ اللَّهِ

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً

قَالُوا يَحْسَرَتْنَا عَلَىٰ مَا فَتَرْنَا فِيهَا

وَهُمْ يَحْمِلُونَ أَوْزَارَهُمْ عَلَىٰ

ظُهُورِهِمْ

853. Their falsity was not due to want of knowledge, but to perversity and selfishness. In their heart was a disease (ii. 10): therefore neither their understanding, nor their ears, nor their eyes do their proper work. They twist what they see, hear, or are taught, and go deeper and deeper into the mire. The deceptions which they used to practise on other people will, before the Seat of Judgment, become clear in their own eyes.

854. Grievous is the burden of sins which the wicked will bear on their backs when they become conscious of them. Some Commentators personify Sins as ugly Demons riding on the backs of men, while the men's Good Deeds become the strong and patient mounts which will carry the men on their backs. If the Good Deeds are few and the Sins many, the man and his Good Deeds will be crushed under the load of the Evil which they carry.

And evil indeed are
The burdens that they bear !

32. What is the life of this world
But play and amusement ?⁸⁵⁵
But best is the Home
In the Hereafter, for those
Who are righteous.
Will ye not then understand ?

33. We know indeed the grief
Which their words do cause thee :
It is not thee they reject :
It is the Signs of God,
Which the wicked contemn.

34. Rejected were the Apostles
Before thee : with patience
And constancy they bore
Their rejection and their wrongs,
Until Our aid did reach
Them : there is none
That can alter the Words
(And Decrees) of God.
Already hast thou received
Some account of those Apostles.

35. If their spurning is hard
On thy mind, yet if
Thou wert able to seek
A tunnel in the ground
Or a ladder to the skies
And bring them a Sign,—⁸⁵⁶
(What good ?). If it were
God's Will, He could
Gather them together
Unto true guidance :

أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَزُرُونَ ○

٣٢- وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ
وَلَكِنَّ أَزْوَاجَ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ
لِّلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ○

٣٣- قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لَيَحْزَنُكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ
فَاتَّهُمْ لَا يَكْذِبُونَكَ
وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ يَسْحَدُونَ ○

٣٤- وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبْتَ رَسُولٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ
فَصَبِرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا كَذَّبُوا
وَأُودُوا حَتَّىٰ أَنهَمْ نَصْرُنَا
وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكَ مِنْ نَّبَايَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ○

٣٥- وَإِنْ كَانَ كِبْرُكَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ
فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَبْتَغِيَ نَفَقًا فِي
الْأَرْضِ أَوْ سُلَّمًا فِي السَّمَاءِ
فَتَأْتِيَهُمْ بِآيَةٍ
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى الْهُدَى ○

855. Play and amusement are for preparing our minds for the serious things of life : in themselves they are not serious. So this life is a preparation for the Eternal Home to which we are going which is far more important than the ephemeral pleasures which may possibly seduce us in this life.

856. There were many Signs of a divine mission in the Apostle's life and in the Message which he delivered. If these did not convince the Unbelievers, was it not vain to seek a miraculous Sign from the bowels of the earth or by a visible ascent to the skies ? If in the Apostle's eagerness to get all to accept his Message, he was hurt at their callousness, active opposition, and persecution of him, he is told that a full knowledge of the working of God's Plan would convince him that impatience was misplaced. This was in the days of persecution before the Hijrat. The history in Medina and after shows how God's truth was ultimately and triumphantly vindicated. Who among the sincere devotees of Muhammad can fail to read vi. 33-35 without tears in his eyes ?

So be not thou
Amongst those who are swayed
By ignorance (and impatience)!

36. Those who listen (in truth),⁸⁵⁷
Be sure, will accept :
As to the dead, God will
Raise them up ; then will they
Be turned unto Him.

37. They say : " Why is not
A Sign sent down
To him from his Lord ? "
Say : " God hath certainly
Power to send down a Sign :
But most of them
Understand not."⁸⁵⁸

38. There is not an animal
(That lives) on the earth,
Nor a being that flies
On its wings, but (forms
Part of) communities like you.⁸⁵⁹
Nothing have We omitted
From the Book, and they (all)
Shall be gathered to their Lord
In the end.

39. Those who reject Our Signs
Are deaf and dumb,—⁸⁶⁰

فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ٥

٣٦- إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ
وَالْمَوْتَى يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ
ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ٥

٣٧- وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ
مِنْ رَبِّهِ
قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يُنْزِلَ آيَةً
وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٥

٣٨- وَمِمَّا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَلَا طَيْرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ
إِلَّا أُمَّةٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ
مَا فَتَرَطْنَا فِي السِّكِّتِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ ٥

٣٩- وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا صُمٌّ وَبُكْمٌ

857. There is a double meaning here. (1) If people listen to truth sincerely and earnestly, they must believe; even if the spiritual faculty is dead, God will by His grace revive it and they will come to Him, if they really try earnestly to understand. (2) The sincere will believe; but those whose hearts are dead will not listen, yet they cannot escape being brought to the Judgment-Seat before Him.

858. Signs are all around them, but they do not understand. If they want a particular Sign to suit their gross ignorance, they will not be humoured, for they can always pick holes in anything that descends to their level.

859. "Animals living on the earth" include those living in the water,—fishes, reptiles, crustaceans, insects, as well as four-footed beasts. Life on the wing is separately mentioned. "Tāir," which is ordinarily translated as "bird," is anything that flies, including mammals like bats. In our pride we may exclude animals from our purview, but they all live a life, social and individual, like ourselves, and all life is subject to the Plan and Will of God. In vi. 59 we are told that not a leaf falls but by His Will, and things dry and green are recorded in His Book. In other words they all obey His archetypal Plan, the Book which is also mentioned here. They are all answerable in their several degrees to His Plan ("shall be gathered to their Lord in the end"). This is not Pantheism; it is ascribing all life, activity, and existence to the Will and Plan of God.

860. The limited free-will of man makes a little difference. If he sees the Signs but shuts his ears to the true Message, and refuses (like a dumb thing) to speak out the Message which all Nature proclaims, then according to the Plan (of his limited free-will) he must suffer and wander, just as, in the opposite case, he will receive grace and salvation.

In the midst of darkness
 Profound : whom God willeth,
 He leaveth to wander :
 Whom He willeth, He placeth
 On the Way that is Straight.

40. Say : " Think ye to yourselves,
 If there come upon you
 The Wrath of God,
 Or the Hour (that ye dread),
 Would ye then call upon
 Other than God ?—
 (Reply) if ye are truthful !

41. " Nay,—On Him would ye
 Call, and if it be
 His Will, He would remove
 (The distress) which occasioned
 Your call upon Him,
 And ye would forget
 (The false gods) which ye
 Join with Him ! "

SECTION 5.

42. Before thee We sent
 (Apostles) to many nations,
 And We afflicted the nations
 With suffering and adversity,
 That they might learn humility.

43. When the suffering reached
 Them from Us, why then
 Did they not learn humility?⁸⁶¹
 On the contrary their hearts
 Became hardened, and Satan
 Made their (sinful) acts
 Seem alluring to them.

44. But when they forgot
 The warning they had received,

فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ
 مَنْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ يُضِلَّهُ ۖ وَمَنْ يَشَاءُ
 يُجْعَلْهُ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ۝

۴۰- قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ
 إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ
 أَوْ أَتَاكُمْ السَّاعَةُ ۖ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَدْعُونَ
 إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

۴۱- بَلْ إِيَّاهُ تَدْعُونَ
 فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ
 إِنْ شَاءَ
 وَتَسْأَلُونَ مَا تُثْبِتُونَ ۝

۴۲- وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ
 فَآخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ
 لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ ۝

۴۳- فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا
 تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ
 وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ
 مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

۴۴- فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ

861. Sorrow and suffering may (if we take them rightly) turn out to be the best gifts of God to us; According to the Psalms (xciv. 12), "Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord !" Through suffering we learn humility, the antidote to many vices and the fountain of many virtues. But if we take them the wrong way, we grumble and complain; we become faint-hearted; and Satan gets his opportunity to exploit us by putting forward the alluring pleasures of his Vanity Fair.

We opened to them the gates
Of all (good) things,⁸⁶²
Until, in the midst
Of their enjoyment
Of Our gifts,
On a sudden, We called
Them to account, when lo !
They were plunged in despair !

45. Of the wrong-doers the last
Remnant was cut off.
Praise be to God,
The Cherisher of the Worlds.⁸⁶³

46. Say : " Think ye, if God
Took away your hearing
And your sight, and sealed up⁸⁶⁴
Your hearts, who—a god
Other than God—could
Restore them to you ?"
See how We explain
The Signs by various (symbols) ;
Yet they turn aside.

47. Say : " Think ye, if
The punishment of God
Comes to you,
Whether suddenly or openly,⁸⁶⁵
Will any be destroyed
Except those who do wrong ?

48. We send the apostles
Only to give good news⁸⁶⁶

فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
حَتَّى إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا
أَخَذْنَا لَهُمْ بَغْتَةً
فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ ○

٢٥- فَقَطَّعَ دَابِرَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٢٦- قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ سَمْعَكُمْ
وَأَبْصَارَكُمْ وَخَتَمَ عَلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ
مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِهِ
أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ
ثُمَّ هُمْ يَصْذَقُونَ ○

٢٧- قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ
بَغْتَةً أَوْ جَهْرَةً
هَلْ يُهْلِكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٢٨- وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ

862. Learning the inner truth of ourselves and the world presupposes a certain advanced stage of sensitiveness and spiritual development. There is a shallower stage, at which prosperity and the good things of life may teach us sympathy and goodness and cheerfulness like that of Mr. Cheeribyles in Dickens. In such cases the Message takes root. But there is another type of character which is puffed up in prosperity. For them prosperity is a trial or even a punishment from the higher point of view. They go deeper and deeper into sin, until they are pulled up of a sudden, and then, instead of being contrite they merely become desperate.

863. God's punishment of wrong-doers is a measure of justice, to protect the true and righteous from their depredations and maintain His righteous decrees. It is an aspect of His character which is emphasised by the epithet " Cherisher of the Worlds."

864. Cf. ii. 7 and n.

865. *Suddenly*—without warning. *Openly*—with many warnings, even to the sinners, though they heed them not. As to those who understand and read the signs of God, they could always tell that all wrong-doing must eventually have its punishment. But it will affect the wrong-doers, not the righteous. It is justice, not revenge.

866. The Apostles are not sent to cancel man's limited free-will. They are sent to preach and teach,—to preach hope to the repentant ("good news"), and to warn the rebellious of the Wrath to come.

And to warn : so those
Who believe and mend
(Their lives),—upon them
Shall be no fear,
Nor shall they grieve.

49. But those who reject
Our Signs,—them
Shall punishment touch,
For that they ceased not
From transgressing.

50. Say : " I tell you not
That with me
Are the Treasures of God,⁸⁶⁷
Nor do I know
What is hidden,
Nor do I tell you I am
An angel. I but follow
What is revealed to me."
Say : " Can the blind
Be held equal to the seeing ? "⁸⁶⁸
Will ye then consider not ?

SECTION 6.

51. Give this warning to those⁸⁶⁹
In whose (hearts) is the fear
That they will be brought
(To Judgment) before their Lord :
Except for Him
They will have no protector
Nor intercessor :
That they may guard
(Against evil).

وَمُنْذِرِينَ فَمَنْ أَمَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ
فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ○

٣٩- وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
يَمَسُّهُمْ الْعَذَابُ
بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ○

٥٠- قُلْ لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ
اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ
وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ
إِنْ أَتَيْتُمْ إِلَّا مَا يُوْحَى إِلَيَّ
قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَى وَالْبَصِيرُ
أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ○

٥١- وَأَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ
أَنْ يُخْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
لَيْسَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ
وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ○

867. Literally, it might mean that the men of God are not like vulgar soothsayers, who pretend to reveal hidden treasures, or peer into future, or claim to be something of a different nature from men. But the meaning is wider : they deal out God's great treasures of truth, but the treasures are not theirs, but God's ; they have greater insight into the higher things, but that insight is not due to their own wisdom, but to God's inspiration ; they are of the same flesh and blood with us, and the sublimity of their words and teaching arises through God's grace—to them and to those who hear them.

868. Therefore compare not the men of God (" the seeing ") with ordinary men (" the blind "). The men of God, although they be but men, have the higher light with them ; therefore do not exact of them petty ephemeral services. Though they are men, they are not as other men, and are entitled to reverence.

869. There are some men—sinners—who yet believe in Judgment ; let them be warned of their personal responsibility to guard against evil ; let them not rely upon protectors or intercessors before God their sins can only be forgiven by God's own Mercy.

52. Send not away those
Who call on their Lord
Morning and evening,
Seeking His Face.⁸⁷⁰
In naught art thou accountable
For them, and in naught are they
Accountable for thee,⁸⁷¹
That thou shouldst turn
Them away, and thus be
(One) of the unjust.

٥٢- وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ
بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ
مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

53. Thus did We try
Some of them by comparison⁸⁷²
With others, that they
Should say : " Is it these
Then that God hath
Favoured from amongst us ? "
Doth not God know best
Those who are grateful ?

٥٣- وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ
لِيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
مِنْ بَيْنِنَا
أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ ○

54. When those come to thee
Who believe in Our Signs,
Say : " Peace be on you :⁸⁷³
Your Lord hath inscribed
For Himself (the rule⁸⁷⁴
Of) Mercy : verily,
If any of you did evil
In ignorance, and thereafter

٥٤- وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا
فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ
أَلَّهُ مِنْ عَمَلٍ مِنْكُمْ سُوءٍ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ

870. *Face* : *wajh* : see ii. 112 and n. 114. " Face " is used for God's Grace or Presence, the highest aim of spiritual aspiration.

871. Some of the rich and influential Quraish thought it beneath their dignity to listen to Muḥammad's teaching in company with the lowly disciples, who were gathered round him. But he refused to send away these lowly disciples, who were sincere seekers after God. From a worldly point of view they had nothing to gain from Muḥammad as he was himself poor, and he had nothing to gain from them as they had no influence. But that was no reason for turning them away indeed their true sincerity entitled them to precedence over worldly men in the kingdom of God, whose justice was vindicated in Muḥammad's daily life in this as in other things. If their sincerity was in any way doubtful, it involved no responsibility for the Preacher.

872. Pursue the argument of the last note. The influential people who were not given precedence over the poor and humble but sincere disciples, were on their trial as to their spiritual insight. Their temptation was to say (and they said it in scorn) : " We are much greater than they : has God then selected these lowly people for His teaching ? " But that was so. And God knew best those who were grateful to Him for His guidance.

873. The humble who had sincere faith, were not only not sent away to humour the wealthy : they were honoured and were given a special salutation, which has become the characteristic salutation in Islam : " Peace be on you,"—the word peace, "*salām*" having special affinity with the word "*Islam*." In words they are given the salutation ; in life they are promised Mercy by the special grace of God.

874. Cf. vi. 12.

Repented, and amended
(His conduct), lo ! He is
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

55. Thus do We explain
The Signs in detail :
That the way of the sinners
May be shown up.⁸⁷⁵

SECTION 7.

56. Say :⁸⁷⁶ " I am forbidden
To worship those — others
Than God—whom ye
Call upon." Say : " I will
Not follow your vain desires :
If I did, I would stray
From the path, and be not
Of the company of those
Who receive guidance."

57. Say : "For me, I (work)
On a clear Sign from my Lord,
But ye reject Him. What ye⁸⁷⁷
Would see hastened, is not
In my power. The Command
Rests with none but God :
He declares the Truth,
And He is the best of judges."

58. Say : " If what ye would see
Hastened were in my power,
The matter would be settled
At once between you and me.⁸⁷⁸

تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ
فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٥٥- وَكَذَلِكَ نَفْصِلُ الْآيَاتِ
وَلِتَسْتَبِينَ سَبِيلُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝

٥٦- قُلْ إِنِّي نُهِيتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ
الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
قُلْ لَا أَتَّبِعُهُمْ أَهْوَاءَكُمْ
قَدْ ضَلَلْتُ إِذَا
وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ۝

٥٧- قُلْ إِنِّي عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي
وَكَذَّبْتُمْ بِهِ مَّا عِندِي مَّا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ
بِهِ إِن الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ
يَقْضُ الْحَقُّ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْفَاصِلِينَ ۝

٥٨- قُلْ لَوْ أَنِّي عِندِي مَّا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ
بِهِ لَقَضَيْتُ الْأَمْرَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ

875. If the way of the sinners (in jealousy and worldly pride) is shown up, and details are given how to honour the truly sincere, it forms the best illustration of the teaching of God.

876. There are a number of arguments now put forward against the Meccans who refused to believe in God's Message. Each argument is introduced with the word " Say." Here are the first four : (1) I have received Light and will follow it ; (2) I prefer my light to your vain desires ; (3) you challenge—" if there is a God, why does He not finish the blasphemers at once ?"—it is not for me to take up ; punishment rests with God ; (4) if it rested with me, it would be for me to take up your challenge ; all I know is that God is not unacquainted with the existence of folly and wickedness, and many other things besides, that no mortal can know ; you can see little glimpses of His Plan, and you can be sure that He will not be tardy in calling you to account.

877. *What ye would see hastened* : what ye, deniers of God, are so impatient about ; the punishment which ye mockingly say does not come to you. Cf. xiii. 6.

878. The Messenger of God is not here to settle scores with the wicked. It is not a matter between them and him. It is a matter between them and God ; he is only a warner against sin, and a declarer of the gospel of salvation.

But God knoweth best
Those who do wrong."

59. With Him are the keys⁸⁷⁹
Of the Unseen, the treasures
That none knoweth but He.
He knoweth whatever there is
On the earth and in the sea.
Not a leaf doth fall
But with His knowledge :
There is not a grain
In the darkness (or depths)
Of the earth, nor anything
Fresh or dry (green or withered),
But is (inscribed) in a Record⁸⁸⁰
Clear (to those who can read).

60. It is He Who doth take
Your souls by night,
And hath knowledge of all
That ye have done by day :
By day doth He raise
You up again ; that a term
Appointed be fulfilled ;
In the end unto Him
Will be your return ;⁸⁸¹
Then will He show you
The truth of all
That ye did.

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ○

٥٩- وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ
لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا
وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظِلْمٍ الْأَرْضِ
وَلَا رَطْبٌ وَلَا يَابِسٌ
إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ○

٦٠- وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُمْ بِالنَّهَارِ
ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى
ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ
ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم
بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ○

C. 78.—God's loving care doth encompass
(vi. 61-82.) Us round throughout life,
And deliver us from dangers
By land and sea. He is the only
Protector : how can we then

879. *Mafātih* : Plural of either *miftah*=a key, or *maftah*=a treasure. Both meanings are implied, and I have accordingly put both in my translation.

880. This is the mystic Record, the archetypal Plan, the Eternal Law, according to which everything seen and unseen is ordered and regulated. There is much mystic doctrine here, explained by beautiful metaphors and illustrations. The simplest things in Nature are subject to His Law. The fresh and the withered, the living and the lifeless—nothing is outside the Plan of His Creation.

881. As the rest of His Creation is subject to His Law and Plan, so is man's life in every particular and at every moment, awake or asleep. The mystery of Sleep—"the twin brother of death"—is called the taking of our souls by Him, with the record of all we have done in our waking moments, and this record sometimes appears to us in confused glimpses in dreams. By day we awaken again to our activities, and so it goes on until we fulfil the term of our life appointed for this earth. Then comes the other Sleep (death), with the longer record of our Day (Life) ; and then in the end comes the Resurrection and Judgment, at which we see everything clearly and not as in dreams, for that is the final Reality.

Forget Him or run after things
That are mere creatures of His,
And shall perish,—while He
Is the Eternal God, adored
By Abraham and all the prophets ?

SECTION 8.

61. He is the Irresistible, (watching)
From above over His worshippers,
And He sets guardians⁸⁸²
Over you. At length,
When death approaches
One of you, Our angels⁸⁸³
Take his soul, and they
Never fail in their duty.

٦١- وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ
وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ
تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ○

62. Then are men returned
Unto God, their Protector,
The (only) Reality :⁸⁸⁴
Is not His the Command ?
And He is the Swiftest
In taking account.

٦٢- ثُمَّ رُدُّوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمُ الْحَقُّ
إِلَّا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ
وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَسِبِينَ ○

63. Say :⁸⁸⁵ “ Who is it
That delivereth you
From the dark recesses⁸⁸⁶
Of land and sea,
When ye call upon Him
In humility

٦٣- قُلْ مَنْ يُنَجِّيكُمْ
مِّنْ ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
تَدْعُونَهُ تَضَرُّعًا

882. *Guardians* : most Commentators understand this to mean guardian-angels. The idea of guardianship is expressed in a general term. God watches over us and guards us, and provides all kinds of agencies, material, moral, and spiritual, to help our growth and development, keep us from harm, and bring us nearer to our Destiny.

883. *Angels* : the word used is *rusul*, the Sent Ones,—the same word as for human Apostles and Messengers sent by God to teach mankind. The agents who come to take our souls at death are accurate in the performance of their duty. They come neither before nor after their appointed time, nor do they do it in any manner other than that fixed by the Command of God.

884. *The only Reality* : *al-haqq*, the Truth, the only True One. The point is that our illusions of the life of this lower world now vanish, when we are rendered back to God, from Whom we came. And now we find that so far from the results of our actions being delayed, they follow more swiftly than we can express in terms of Time. Here is the answer to the taunt of those who were impatient of the working of God's Plans (vi. 57-58).

885. In continuation of the four heads of argument referred to in n. 876, we have three more heads here in vi. 63-65 : (5) your calling upon Him in times of danger shows that in the depths of your hearts you feel His need ; (6) God's Providence saves you, and yet you ungratefully run after false gods ; (7) it is not only physical calamities that you have to fear ; your mutual discords and .vengeances are even more destructive, and only faith in God can save you from them.

886. *Zulumāt* : dark recesses, terrible lurking dangers, as in deserts or mountains, or forests, or seas.

And silent terror :⁸⁸⁷

' If He only delivers us
From these (dangers),
(We vow) we shall truly
Show our gratitude ? '

64. Say : " It is God
That delivereth you
From these and all (other)
Distresses : and yet
Ye worship false gods ! "

65. Say : " He hath power
To send calamities⁸⁸⁸
On you, from above
And below, or to cover
You with confusion
In party strife,
Giving you a taste
Of mutual vengeance—
Each from the other. "
See how We explain
The Signs by various (symbols) ;⁸⁸⁹
That they may understand.

66. But thy people reject
This, though it is
The Truth. Say : " Not mine
Is the responsibility
For arranging your affairs ;⁸⁹⁰

67. For every Message
Is a limit of time,
And soon shall ye
Know it. "

وْ خُفْيَةً

لِّئِنْ أُنْجَيْنَا مِنْ هَٰذَا
لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ○

٦٣- قُلِ اللَّهُ يُنَجِّيكُمْ
مِنْهَا وَمِنْ كُلِّ كَرْبٍ
تُمْ أَنْتُمْ تَشْرِكُونَ ○

٦٥- قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ
عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِنْ فَوْقِكُمْ
أَوْ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ
أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيْعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُمْ
بِأَسِّ بَعْضٍ ۖ أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ
الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ○

٦٦- وَكَذَّبَ بِهِ قَوْمُكَ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ
قُلْ لَسْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ ○

٦٧- لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ مُسْتَقَرٌّ
وَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ○

887. There are two readings, but they both ultimately yield the same meaning. (1) *Khufyatan*, silently, secretly from the depth of your inner heart, suggesting unspeakable terror. (2) *Khifatan*, out of terror or fear or reverence, as in vii. 205.

888. *Calamities from above and below* : such as storms and blizzards, torrential rain, etc., or earthquakes, floods, landslides, etc.

889. Cf. vi. 46, where this refrain commences the argument now drawing to a close.

890. At the date of this revelation, the Apostle's people had as a body not only rejected God's truth, but were persecuting it. The Apostle's duty was to deliver his Message, which he did. He was not responsible for their conduct. But he told them plainly that all warnings from God had their time limit, as they would soon find out. And they did find out, within a very few years. For the leaders of the resistance came to an evil end, and their whole system of fraud and selfishness was destroyed, to make room for the purer Faith of Islam. Apart from that particular application, there is the more general application, for the present time and for all time.

68. ~~When~~ When thou seest men
Engaged in vain discourse
About Our Signs, turn
Away from them unless⁸⁹¹
They turn to a different
Theme. If Satan ever
Makes thee forget, then
After recollection, sit not
Thou in the company
Of those who do wrong.

69. On their account
No responsibility
Falls on the righteous,⁸⁹²
But (their duty)
Is to remind them,
That they may (learn
To) fear God.

70. Leave alone those
Who take their religion
To be mere play
And amusement,⁸⁹³
And are deceived
By the life of this world.
But proclaim (to them)
This (truth) : that every soul
Delivers itself to ruin
By its own acts :⁸⁹⁴
It will find for itself
No protector or intercessor
Except God : if it offered
Every ransom, (or
Reparation), none
Will be accepted : such is
(The end of) those who
Deliver themselves to ruin
By their own acts :
They will have for drink
(Only) boiling water,

٦٨- وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ
فِي آيَاتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا
فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيَنَّكَ
الشَّيْطَانُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرِى
مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٦٩- وَمَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ مِنْ
حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
وَلَكِنْ ذَكِّرْ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ○

٧٠- وَذَرِ الَّذِينَ
اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لِبَآءٍ وَآلِهًا
وَعَتَرْتَهُمْ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
وَذَكَّرَ بِهِ أَنْ تُبْسَلَ نَفْسٌ بِمَا
كَسَبَتْ ۖ
لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ
وَإِنْ تَعْدِلْ كُلُّ عَدْلٍ لَا يُؤْخَذَ
مِنْهَا ۚ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أُبْسِلُوا بِمَا كَسَبُوا
لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ

891. Cf. iv. 140. If in any gathering truth is ridiculed, we must not sit in such company. If we find ourselves in it, as soon as we realise it, we must show our disapproval by leaving.

892. " Evil to him who evil thinks," or evil does. Every man is responsible for his own conduct But the righteous have two duties : (1) to protect themselves from infection, and (2) to proclaim God's truth, for even in the most unlikely circumstances, it is possible that it may have some effect.

893. Cf. vi. 32, where we are told that the life of this world is mere play and amusement, and Religion and the Hereafter are the serious things that require our attention. Worldly people reverse this, because they are deceived by the allurements of this life. But their own acts will find them out

894. We must never forget our own personal responsibility for all we do, or deceive ourselves by the illusion of vicarious atonement.

And for punishment,
One most grievous :
For they persisted
In rejecting God.

SECTION 9.

71. Say :⁸⁹⁵ " Shall we indeed
Call on others besides God,—
Things that can do us
Neither good nor harm,—
And turn on our heels
After receiving guidance
From God ?—like one
Whom the evil ones
Have made into a fool,
Wandering bewildered
Through the earth, his friends
Calling ' Come to us,'
(Vainly) guiding him to the Path."

Say : " God's guidance
Is the (only) guidance,
And we have been directed
To submit ourselves
To the Lord of the worlds ;—

72. " To establish regular prayers
And to fear God :
For it is to Him
That we shall be
Gathered together."

73. It is He Who created
The heavens and the earth
In true (proportions) :⁸⁹⁶
The day He saith, "Be,"

وَعَذَابُ الْيَوْمِ
بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ۝

١- قُلْ أَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا
وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا
وَنُرْذِلْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْنَا اللَّهَ
كَالَّذِي اسْتَمَاتَتْ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي
الْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ
لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ ائْتِنَا
قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ
هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ
وَأَمْرُنَا لِلْإِسْلَامِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝
٢- وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَالْزَكَاةَ
وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ۝
٣- وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
بِالْحَقِّ ۚ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ۚ

895. In continuation of the seven heads of argument referred to in nn. 876 and 885, we have here the final two heads : (8) who would, after receiving guidance from the living, eternal God, turn to lifeless idols ? To do so would indeed show that we were made into fools, wandering to a precipice ; (9) therefore accept the only true guidance, the guidance of God, and obey His Law, for we shall have to answer before His judgment-seat.

896. The argument mounts up here, leading to the great insight of Abraham the true in faith, who did not stop short at the wonders of nature, but penetrated " from nature up to nature's God." God not only created the heavens and the earth : with every increase of knowledge we see in what true and perfect proportions all Creation is held together. Creatures are subject to Time, but the Creator is not : His word is the key that opens the door of existence. It is not only the starting point of existence, but the whole measure and standard of Truth and Right. There may possibly be, to our sight in this great world, aberrations of human or other wills, but the moment the trumpet sounds for the last day, His judgment-seat will, with perfect justice, restore the dominion of Right and Reality. For His knowledge and wisdom cover all reality.

Behold ! it is. His Word
Is the Truth. His will be
The dominion the day
The trumpet will be blown.
He knoweth the Unseen
As well as that which is
Open. For He
Is the Wise, well acquainted
(With all things).

74. **Isro !** Abraham said
To his father Azar :
"Takest thou idols for gods ?
For I see thee
And thy people
In manifest error."

75. So also did We show⁸⁹⁷
Abraham the power
And the laws of the heavens
And the earth, that he
Might (with understanding)
Have certitude.

76. When the night
Covered him over,
He saw a star :
He said : "This is my Lord."
But when it set,
He said : "I love not
Those that set."⁸⁹⁸

77. When he saw the moon
Rising in splendour,
He said : "This is my Lord."
But when the moon set,

قَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ ط

وَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ

يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ

عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ

وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْحَبِيرُ ○

٤٣- وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ أَزَّرْ

أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا آلِهَةً

إِنِّي أَرَاكَ وَتَوَّامَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ○

٤٥- وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي

إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ○

٤٦- فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ

رَأَى كَوْكَبًا

قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي

فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْآفِلِينَ ○

٤٧- فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِعًا

قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلََمَّا أَفَلَ

897. Now comes the story of Abraham, He lived among the Chaldeans, who had great knowledge of the stars and heavenly bodies. But he got beyond that physical world and saw the spiritual world behind His ancestral idols meant nothing to him. That was the first step. But God took him many degrees higher. God showed him with certitude the spiritual glories behind the magnificent powers and laws of the physical universe.

898. This allegory shows the stages of Abraham's spiritual enlightenment. It should not be supposed that he literally worshipped stars or heavenly bodies. Having seen through the folly of ancestral idol worship, he began to see the futility of worshipping distant beautiful things that shine, which the vulgar endue with a power which does not reside in them. A type of such is a star shining in the darkness of the night. Superstition might read fortunes in it, but truer knowledge shows that it rises and sets according to laws whose author is God. And its light is extinguished in the broader light of day. Its worship is therefore futile. It is not a Power, much less the Supreme Power.

He said : " Unless my Lord
Guide me, I shall surely
Be among those
Who go astray."⁸⁹⁹

78. When he saw the sun
Rising in splendour,
He said : " This is my Lord ;
This is the greatest (of all)."
But when the sun set,
He said : " O my people !
I am indeed free
From your (guilt)
Of giving partners to God."⁹⁰⁰

79. " For me, I have set
My face, firmly and truly,
Towards Him Who created
The heavens and the earth,
And never shall I give
Partners to God."

80. His people disputed⁹⁰¹
With him. He said :
"(Come) ye to dispute
With me, about God,
When He (Himself)
Hath guided me ?
I fear not (the beings)
Ye associate with God :

قَالَ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي
لَا كُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ ٥

٤٨- فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسُ بَازِغَةً

قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي

هَذَا أَكْبَرُ

فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ

قَالَ يَقَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ٥

٤٩- إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي

فَطَرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا

وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ٥

٥٠- وَحَاجَّةَ قَوْمِهِ ط

قَالَ أَنْتَحِجُّونِي فِي اللَّهِ

وَقَدْ هَدَانِي ط

وَلَا أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِ

899. Continuing the allegory, the moon, though she looks bigger and brighter than the star, turns out on closer knowledge, not only to set like the star, but to change her shape from hour to hour, and even to depend for her light on some other body ! How deceptive are appearances ! That is not God ! At that stage you begin to search for something more reliable than appearances to the eye in the darkness of the night. You ask for guidance from God.

900. The next stage in the allegory is the sun. You are in the open light of Day. Now you have the right clue. You see the biggest object in the heavens. But is it the biggest ? There are thousands of stars in the universe bigger than the sun. And every day the sun appears and disappears from your sight. Such is not the God who created you and all these wonderful works of His. What folly to worship creatures, when we might turn to the true God ! Let us abjure all these follies and proclaim the one true God.

901. To continue Abraham's allegory : if spiritual enlightenment go so far as to take a man beyond his ancestral worship, people will come to dispute with him. They will frighten him with the dire consequences of his dissent. What does he care ? He has found the truth. He is free from superstitious fears, for has he not found the true God, without Whose Will nothing can happen ? On the contrary he knows that it is the godless who have just grounds for fear. And he offers admonition to them, and arguments that should bring them the clearness of truth instead of the vagueness and mystery of superstition,—the security of Faith instead of the haunting fear of those who have no clear guidance.

Unless my Lord willeth,
(Nothing can happen).
My Lord comprehendeth
In His knowledge all things.
Will ye not (yourselves)
Be admonished ?

إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ رَبِّي شَيْئًا
وَيَسِّرْ لِي كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا
أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ

81. "How should I fear
(The beings) ye associate
With God, when ye
Fear not to give partners
To God without any warrant
Having been given to you ?
Which of (us) two parties
Hath more right to security ?
(Tell me) if ye know.

أَمْ وَكَيفَ أَخَافُ مَا أَشْرَكْتُمْ
وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَتَّكُمُ اشْرَكْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ
مَا لَكُمْ يُنْزِلُ بِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا
فَأَمِ الْغَافِقِينَ أَحَقُّ بِالْأَمْنِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

82. "It is those who believe
And confuse not their beliefs
With wrong—that are
(Truly) in security, for they
Are on (right) guidance."

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ
بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ

C. 79.—The good men and true, who succeeded
(vi. 83-110) Abraham, received the gifts
Of revelation and guidance, and kept
Alive God's Message, which now
Is proclaimed in the Qur-ān
In which is blessing and confirmation
Of all that went before. In the daily
Pageants of Nature,—the dawn
And the restful night, the sun,
The moon, the stars that guide
The mariner in distant seas,
The rain-clouds pouring abundance,
And the fruits that delight the heart
Of man—can ye not read
Signs of God ? No vision can
Comprehend Him, yet He
Knoweth and comprehendeth all.

SECTION 10.

83. What was the reasoning
About Us, which
We gave to Abraham
(To use) against his people :⁹⁰²

وَذَلِكَ حُجَّتُنَا آتَيْنَاهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَى
قَوْمِهِ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مَن نَّشَاءُ

⁹⁰² The spiritual education of Abraham raised him many degrees above his contemporaries, and he was expected to use that knowledge and dignity for preaching the truth among his own people,

We raise whom We will,
Degree after degree :
For thy Lord is full
Of wisdom and knowledge.

84. We gave him Isaac
And Jacob : all (three)
We guided :⁹⁰³
And before him,
We guided Noah,⁹⁰⁴
And among his progeny,
David, Solomon, Job,
Joseph, Moses, and Aaron :
Thus do We reward
Those who do good :

85. And Zakariya and John,⁹⁰⁵
And Jesus and Elias :
All in the ranks
Of the Righteous :

86. And Isma'il and Elisha,⁹⁰⁶
And Jonas, and Lot :

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥

٨٤- وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۖ
كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا ۚ وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ
وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ
وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَى وَهَارُونَ ۖ
وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ٥

٨٥- وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَى وَعِيسَى وَإِيلَاسَ
كُلٌّ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥

٨٦- وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا ۖ

903. We have now a list of eighteen Apostles in four groups, covering the great Teachers accepted among the three great religions based on Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad. The first group to be mentioned is that of Abraham, his son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob. Abraham was the first to have a Book. His Book is mentioned in Q. lxxxvii 19, though it is now lost. They were therefore the first to receive Guidance in the sense of a Book.

904. In the second group, we have the great founders of families, apart from Abraham, viz., Noah, of the time of the Flood; David and Solomon, the real establishers of the Jewish monarchy; Job, who lived 140 years, saw four generations of descendants, and was blessed at the end of his life with large pastoral wealth (Job xlii 16, 12); Joseph, who as Minister of State did great things in Egypt and was the progenitor of two Tribes; and Moses and Aaron, the leaders of the Exodus from Egypt. They led active lives and are called "doers of good."

905. The third group consists not of men of action, but Preachers of Truth, who led solitary lives. Their epithet is, "the Righteous." They were mystic prophets and form a connected group round Jesus. Zakariya was the father of John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus (iii. 37-41); and Jesus referred to John the Baptist as Elias: "this is Elias, which was for to come" (Matt. x. 14); and Elias is said to have been present and talked to Jesus at the Transfiguration on the Mount (Matt. xviii. 3). Elias is the same as Elijah.

906. This is the last group, described as those "favoured above the nations." It consists of four men who had all great misfortunes to contend with, and were concerned in the clash of nations, but they kept in the path of God, and came through above the clash of nations. Isma'il was the eldest son of Abraham; when he was a baby, he and his mother had nearly died of thirst in the desert round Mecca; but they were saved by the well of Zamzam, and he became the founder of the new Arab nation. Elisha (Al-Yasa) succeeded to the mantle of the Prophet Elijah (same as Elias, see last note); he lived in troublous times for both the Jewish kingdoms (of Judah and Israel); there were wicked kings, and other nations were pressing in on them; but he performed many miracles, and some check was given to the enemies under his advice. The story of Jonas (Yūnus) is well-known: he was swallowed by a fish or whale, but was saved by God's mercy; through his preaching, his city (Nineveh) was saved (x. 98). Lot was a contemporary and nephew of Abraham: when the city of Sodom was destroyed for its wickedness, he was saved as a just man (vii. 80-84).

And to all We gave
Favour above the nations :

87. (To them) and their fathers,⁹⁰⁷
And progeny and brethren :
We chose them,
And We guided them
To a straight Way.

88. This is the Guidance
Of God : He giveth
That guidance to whom
He pleaseth, of His worshippers.
If they were to join
Other gods with Him,
All that they did
Would be vain for them.

89. These were the men
To whom We gave
The Book, and Authority,
And Prophethood : if these
(Their descendants) reject them,⁹⁰⁸
Behold ! We shall entrust
Their charge to a new People
Who reject them not.

90. Those were the (prophets)
Who received God's guidance :
Copy the guidance they received ;
Say : " No reward for this
Do I ask of you :
This is no less than
A Message for the nations."

SECTION 11.

91. Do just estimate of God⁹⁰⁹
Do they make when they say :

وَكَلَّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

٨٧- وَمِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَإِخْوَانِهِمْ
وَاجْتَبَيْنَاهُمْ وَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ
إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ۝

٨٨- ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ
يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۖ
وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ
مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

٨٩- أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَ
الْحِكْمَةَ وَالنَّبُوَّةَ ۖ
فَإِنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هَؤُلَاءِ فَقَدْ وَكَلْنَا بِهَا
قَوْمًا لَيَكْفُرُنَّ بِهَا بِكُفْرَيْنٍ ۝

٩٠- أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ
فَبِهِدَاهُمْ أَقْتَدِ ۖ
قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ۖ
إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ۝

٩١- وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا

907. I take verse 87 to refer back to all the four groups just mentioned.

908. *Them, i.e.,* the Book, and Authority and Prophethood. They were taken away from the other People of the Book and entrusted to the holy Apostle Muhammad and his People.

909. *Qadara* : to weigh, judge, or estimate the value or capacity of anything ; to have power so to do. Cf. *Qadir* in iv. 149 and n. 655. The Jews who denied the inspiration of Muhammad had a good answer in their own books about the inspiration of Moses. To those who do not believe in Moses, the answer is more general : is it a just estimate of God to think either that He has not the power or the will to guide mankind, seeing that He is Omnipotent and the Source of all good ? If you say that guidance comes, not through and inspired book or man, but through our general intelligence, we point to the spiritual ignorance of "you and your ancestors," the sad spiritual darkness of men and nations high in the intellectual scale.

" Nothing doth God send down
To man (by way of revelation) ":
Say : " Who then sent down
The Book which Moses brought ?—
A light and guidance to man :⁹¹⁰
But ye make it into
(Separate) sheets for show,⁹¹¹
While ye conceal much
(Of its contents) : therein
Were ye taught that
Which ye knew not—
Neither ye nor your fathers."
Say : " God (sent it down) ":
Then leave them to plunge
In vain discourse and trifling.

92. And this is a Book
Which We have sent down,
Bringing blessings,⁹¹² and confirming
(The revelations) which came
Before it : that thou
Mayest warn the Mother⁹¹³
Of Cities and all around her.
Those who believe
In the Hereafter
Believe in this (Book),
And they are constant
In guarding their Prayers.⁹¹⁴

93. ~~Who~~ Who can be more wicked
Than one who inventeth

مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَشَرٍ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
قُلْ مَنْ أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ
مُوسَى نُورًا وَهُدًى لِلنَّاسِ
تَجْعَلُونَهُ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا
وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا
وَعُلِمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا
آبَاؤُكُمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ
ثُمَّ ذَرَهُمْ فِي خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ
۝ ٩٢ وَهَذَا الْكِتَابُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكًا مُصَدِّقًا
الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَلِتُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَى
وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا
وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ
وَهُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ
۝ ٩٣ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ

910. Cf. v. 47 and n. 750, and v. 49. In those passages Guidance (in practical conduct) is put before Light (or spiritual insight), as they refer to ordinary or average men. Here Light (or spiritual insight) is put first as the question is : does God send inspiration ?

911. The Message to Moses had unity : it was one Book. The present Old Testament is a collection of odd books ("sheets") of various kinds : see Appendix II., end of S. v. In this way you can make a show, but there is no unity, and much of the spirit of the original is lost or concealed or overlaid. The same applies to the New Testament : see Appendix III., after Appendix II.

912. *Mubarak* : blessed, as having received God's blessing ; bringer of blessings to others, as having been blessed by God. God's highest blessing is the Guidance and Light which the Book brings to us, and which brings us nearer to Him.

913. *Mother of Cities* : Mecca, now the Qibla and Centre of Islam. If this verse was (like the greater part of the Chapter) revealed in Mecca before the Hijrat, and before Mecca was made the Qibla of Islam, Mecca was nonetheless the Mother of Cities, being traditionally associated with Abraham and with Adam and Eve (see ii. 125, and n. 217 to ii. 197).

All round Mecca : would mean, the whole world if we look upon Mecca as the Centre.

914. An earnest study of the Qur-an is true worship ; so is Prayer, and so are all deeds of goodness and charity.

A lie against God,
Or saith, "I have
Received inspiration,"
When he hath received
None, or (again) who saith,
"I can reveal the like
Of what God hath revealed" ?
If thou couldst but see
How the wicked (do fare)
In the flood of confusion
At death !— the angels
Stretch forth their hands,
(Saying), "Yield up your souls :"⁹¹⁵
This day shall ye receive
Your reward,—a penalty
Of shame, for that ye used
To tell lies against God,
And scornfully to reject
Of His Signs !"

94. "And behold ! ye come
To Us bare and alone
As We created you
For the first time :"⁹¹⁶
Ye have left behind you
All (the favours) which
We bestowed on you :
We see not with you
Your intercessors
Whom ye thought to be
Partners in your affairs :
So now all relations
Between you have been
Cut off, and your (pet) fancies
Have left you in the lurch !"⁹¹⁷

افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ
وَلَمْ يُوْحَ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ
وَمَنْ قَالَ سَأُنْزِلُ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ
فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ
أَخْرِجُوا أَنْفُسَكُمُ
الْيَوْمَ تَجْزُونَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ
وَكُنْتُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ○

٩٣-وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فَرَادَى
كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
وَتَرَكْتُمْ مَا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ
وَمَا نَرَى مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَاءَ الَّذِينَ
رَعَيْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ فِيكُمْ شُرَكَاءُ
لَقَدْ تَقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ
وَصَلَّ عَنْكُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ○

915. *Yield up your souls* : or "get your souls to come out of your bodies." The wicked, we may suppose, are not anxious to part with the material existence in their bodies for the "reward" which in irony is stated to be there to welcome them.

916. Some of the various ideas connected with "creation" are noted in n. 120 to ii, 117. In the creation of man there are various processes. If his body was created out of clay, i.e., earthy matter, there was an earlier process of the creation of such earthy matter. Here the body is left behind, and the soul is being addressed. The soul underwent various processes of fashioning and adapting to its various functions in its various surroundings (xxxii. 7-9). But each individual soul, after release from the body, comes back as it was created, with nothing more than its history, "the deeds which it has earned," which are really a part of it. Any exterior things given to help in its development, "the favours which We bestowed on you," it must necessarily leave behind, however it may have been proud of them. These exterior things may be material things, e.g., wealth, property, signs of power, influence and pride such as sons, relatives, and friends, etc., or they may be intangible things, like talents, intellect, social gifts, etc.

917. The false ideas of intercessors, demi-gods, gods, saviours, etc., now vanish like unsubstantial visions, "leaving not a wrack behind." Now the soul is face to face with reality. Its personal responsibility is brought home to it.

SECTION 12.

95. It is God Who causeth⁹¹⁸
 The seed-grain
 And the date-stone
 To split and sprout.⁹¹⁹
 He causeth the living
 To issue from the dead,
 And He is the One
 To cause the dead
 To issue from the living.⁹²⁰
 That is God : then how
 Are ye deluded
 Away from the truth ?

٩٥- إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَى
 يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ
 مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ
 وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتِ
 مِنَ الْحَيِّ
 ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ ۝

918. Another beautiful nature passage, referring to God's wonderful artistry in His Creation. In how few and how simple words, the whole pageant of Creation is placed before us! Beginning from our humble animal needs and dependence on the vegetable world, we are asked to contemplate the interaction of the living and the dead. Here is mystic teaching, referring not only to physical life but to the higher life above the physical plane,—not only to individual life but to the collective life of nations. Then we take a peep into the daily miracle of morning, noon, and night, and pass on to the stars that guide the distant mariner. We rise still higher to the mystery of the countless individuals from the one human soul,—their sojourn and their destiny. So we get back to the heavens: the description of the luscious fruits which the "gentle rain from heaven" produces, leaves us to contemplate the spiritual fruits which faith will provide for us, with the aid of the showers of God's mercy.

919. The seed-grain and the date-stone are selected as types in the vegetable kingdom, showing how our physical life depends on it. The fruits mentioned later (in vi. 99) start another allegory which we shall notice later. Botanists will notice that the seed-grain includes the cereals (such as wheat, barley, rice, millet, etc.) which are monocotyledons, as well as the pulses (such as beans, peas, gram, etc.) and other seeds which are dicotyledons. These two represent the most important classes of food grains, while the date-palm, a monocotyledon, represents for Arabia both food, fruit, confectionery, thatch and pillars for houses, shady groves in oases, and a standard measure of wealth and well-being. "*Split and sprout*": both ideas are included in the root *falaqa*, and a third is expressed by the word "cleave" in the next verse, for the action of evolving day-break from the dark. I might almost have used the word "churn," familiar to students of Hindu lore in the Hindu allegory of the "churning of the ocean." For vegetables, "split and sprout" represents a double process: (1) the seed divides, and (2) one part shoots up, seeking the light, and forming leaves and the visible parts of the future tree, and the other part digs down into the dark, forming the roots and seeking just that sustenance from the soil, which is adapted for the particular plant. This is just one small instance of the "judgment and ordering" of God, referred to in the next verse.

920. This does not mean that in physical nature there are no limits between life and non-life, between the organic and the non-organic. In fact physicists are baffled at the barrier between them and frankly confess that they cannot solve the mystery of Life. If there is such a barrier in physical nature, is it not all the more wonderful that God can create Life out of nothing? He has but to say, "Be," and it is. He can bring Life from non-Life and annihilate Life. But there are two other senses in which we can contemplate the contrast between the living and the dead. (1) We have just been speaking of the botanical world. Take it as a whole, and see the contrast between the winter of death, the spring of revivification, the summer of growth, and the autumn of decay, leading back to the death of winter. Here is a cycle of living from dead, and dead from living. (2) Take our spiritual life, individual or collective. We rise from the darkness of spiritual nothingness to the light of spiritual life. And if we do not follow the spiritual laws, God will take away that life and we shall be again as dead. We may die many deaths. The keys of life and death are in God's hands. Neither Life nor Death are fortuitous things. Behind them both is the Cause of Causes,—and only He.

96. He it is that cleaveth
The day-break (from the dark):
He makes the night
For rest and tranquillity,
And the sun and moon
For the reckoning (of time):
Such is the judgment⁹²¹
And ordering of (Him),
The Exalted in Power,
The Omniscient.

97. It is He Who maketh
The stars (as beacons) for you,
That ye may guide yourselves,
With their help,
Through the dark spaces
Of land and sea:⁹²²
We detail Our Signs
For people who know.

98. It is He Who hath
Produced you⁹²³
From a single person:
Here is a place of sojourn
And a place of departure:⁹²⁴
We detail Our Signs
For people who understand.

٩٦- قَالَ لَيْلٍ الْإِصْبَاحِ
وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا
وَالشَّمْسِ
وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا
ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ
الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ○

٩٧- وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ
لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا
فِي ظُلُمَاتِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّجْمِ
قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ
لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

٩٨- وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَكُم
مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ
فَسْتَنْقِزُوا مُسْتَوْدَعًا
قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ ○

921. The night, the day, the sun, the moon,—the great astronomica universe of God. How far, and yet how near to us! God's universe is boundless, and we can barely comprehend even its relations to us. But this last we must try to do if we want to be numbered with "the people who know." *Taqdīr*: Cf. vi. 91 and n. 909, and iv. 149 and n. 655.

922. See the last note. At sea, or in deserts or forests, or "in fairy scenes forlorn,"—whenever we sweep over wide spaces, it is the stars that act as our guides, just as the sun and moon have already been mentioned as our measures of time.

923. *Produced*: *ansha-a*—made you grow, increase, develop, reach maturity; another of the processes of creation. This supplements n. 120 to ii. 117 and n. 916 to vi. 94. It is one of the wonders of God's Creation, that from one person we have grown to be so many, and each individual has so many faculties and capacities, and yet we are all one. In the next verse we have the allegory of grapes and other fruits: all grapes may be similar to look at, yet each variety has a distinctive flavour and other distinctive qualities, and each individual grape may have its own special qualities. So for man.

924. In the sojourn of this life we must respond to God's hand in fashioning us, by making full use of all our faculties, and we must get ready for our departure into the Life that will be eternal.

99. It is He Who sendeth down
 Rain from the skies :⁹²⁵
 With it We produce
 Vegetation of all kinds :
 From some We produce
 Green (crops), out of which
 We produce grain,
 Heaped up (at harvest) ;
 Out of the date-palm
 And its sheaths (or spathes)
 (Come) clusters of dates
 Hanging low and near :
 And (then there are) gardens
 Of grapes, and olives,
 And pomegranates,
 Each similar (in kind)
 Yet different (in variety) :⁹²⁶
 When they begin to bear fruit,
 Feast your eyes with the fruit
 And the ripeness thereof.⁹²⁷
 Behold ! in these things
 There are Signs for people
 Who believe.⁹²⁸

۹۹- وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً
 فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
 فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا
 نُخْرِجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُتَرَاكِبًا
 وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِنْ طَلْعِهَا
 قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ
 وَجَنَّاتٍ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ
 وَالزَّيْتُونِ وَالرَّيْحَانِ مُمْتَلِئًا
 وَغَيْرِ مُتَشَابِهٍ
 انْظُرُوا إِلَى ثَمَرِهِ
 إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ
 إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ
 لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

925. Our allegory now brings us to maturity, the fruit, the harvest, the vintage. Through the seed we came up from nothingness to life; we lived our daily life of rest and work and passed the mile-stones of time; we had the spiritual experience of traversing through vast spaces in the spiritual world, guiding our course through the star of Faith; we grew; and now for the harvest or the vintage! How satisfied the grower must be when the golden grain is harvested in heaps or the vintage gathered! So will man if he has produced the fruits of Faith!

926. Each fruit—whether it is grapes, or olives, or pomegranates,—looks alike in its species, and yet each variety may be different in flavour, consistency, shape, size, colour, juice or oil contents, proportion of seed to fruit, etc. In each variety individuals may be different. Apply the allegory to man, whose varied spiritual fruit may be equally different and yet equally valuable!

927. And so we finish this wonderful allegory. Search through the world's literature, and see if you can find another such song or hymn,—so fruity in its literary flavour, so profound in its spiritual meaning!

928. There is a refrain in this song, which is subtly varied. In verse 97 it is: "We detail Our Signs for people who *know*." So far we were speaking of the things we see around us every day. Knowledge is the appropriate instrument for these things. In verse 98 we read: "We detail Our Signs for people who *understand*." Understanding is a higher faculty than knowledge, and is necessary for seeing the mystery and meaning of this life. At the end of verse 99 we have: "In these things there are Signs for people who *believe*." Here we are speaking of the real fruits of spiritual Life. For them Faith is necessary, as bringing us nearer to God.

100. Yet they make
The Jinns equals⁹²⁹
With God, though God
Did create the Jinns ;
And they falsely,
Having no knowledge,
Attribute to Him
Sons and daughters.
Praise and glory be
To Him ! (for He is) above
What they attribute to Him !

SECTION 13.

101. No Him is due
The primal origin
Of the heavens and the earth :⁹³⁰
How can He have a son
When He hath no consort ?
He created all things,
And He hath full knowledge
Of all things.
102. That is God, your Lord !
There is no god but He,
The Creator of all things :
Then worship ye Him :
And He hath power
To dispose of all affairs.
103. No vision can grasp Him,
But His grasp is over

١٠٠- وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ
وَخَلَقَهُمْ
وَخَرَفُوا لَهُ بَنِينَ
وَبَنَاتٍ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ
سُبْحَنَهُ
وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ ۝

١٠١- بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ
وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةً
وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ
وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

١٠٢- ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ
وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ۝

١٠٣- لَا تَدْرِكُهُ الْبَصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ

929. *Jinns*: who are they? In xviii, 50 we are told that Iblis was one of the Jinns, and it is suggested that that was why he disobeyed the Command of God. But in that passage and other similar passages, we are told that God commanded the angels to bow down to Adam, and they obeyed except Iblis. That implies that Iblis had been of the company of angels. In many passages Jinns and men are spoken of together. In lv. 14-15, man is stated to have been created from clay, while Jinns from a flame of fire. The root meaning of *janna*, *yajinnu*, is "to be covered or hidden," and *janna yajunnu*, in the active voice, "to cover or hide," as in vi. 76. Some people say that *jinn* therefore means the hidden qualities or capacities in man; others that it means wild or jungle folk hidden in the hills or forests. I do not wish to be dogmatic, but I think, from a collation and study of the Quranic passages, that the meaning is simply "a spirit," or an invisible or hidden force. In folk-lore stories and romances like the Arabian Nights they become personified into fantastic forms, but with them we are not concerned here.

930. Cf. ii. 117 and n. 120.

All vision : He is
Above all comprehension,⁹³¹.
Yet is acquainted with all things.

الْأَبْصَارُ
وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ۝

104. "How have come to you,
From your Lord, proofs
(To open your eyes) :
If any will see,
It will be for (the good
Of) his own soul ;
If any will be blind,
It will be to his own
(Harm) : I am not (here)
To watch over your doings."⁹³²

۱۰۴- قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ
فَلَِنَفْسِهِ
وَمَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا
وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيفٍ ۝

105. Thus do We explain
The Signs by various (symbols) :⁹³³
That they may say,
"Thou hast taught (us) diligently,"
And that We may make
The matter clear
To those who know."⁹³⁴

۱۰۵- وَكَذَلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ
وَلِيَقُولُوا دَرَسْتَ
وَلِنُبَيِّنَهُ
لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

106. Follow what thou art taught
By inspiration from thy Lord :
There is no god but He :
And turn aside from those
Who join gods with God.

۱۰۶- اتَّبِعْ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
وَاعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

931. *Latif* : fine, subtle, so fine and subtle as to be invisible to the physical eye ; so fine as to be imperceptible to the senses ; figuratively, so pure as to be above the mental or spiritual vision of ordinary men. The active meaning should also be understood. 'One who understands the finest mysteries' Cf xxii. 63, and n 2844.

932. I understand "Say" to be understood in the beginning of this verse. The words would then be the words of the Apostle, as in fact is suggested in verse 107 below. That is why I have enclosed them in inverted commas.

933. Cf. vi. 65, and n, 889.

934. The teaching in the Qur-ān explains things by various symbols, parables, narratives, and appeals to nature. Each time, a new phase of the question is presented to our minds. This is what a diligent and earnest teacher would do, such as was Muḥammad Musta'ā. Those who were in search of knowledge and had thus acquired some knowledge of spiritual things were greatly helped to understand more clearly the things of which, before the varied explanations, they had only one-sided knowledge.

107. If it had been God's Plan,⁹³⁵
 They would not have taken
 False gods: but We
 Made thee not one
 To watch over their doings,
 Nor art thou set
 Over them to dispose
 Of their affairs.

١٠٧- وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
 مَا أَشْرَكُوا
 وَمَا جَعَلْنَاكَ
 عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظًا
 وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ ○

108. Revile not ye
 Those whom they call upon
 Besides God, lest
 They out of spite
 Revile God
 In their ignorance.
 Thus have We made
 Alluring to each people⁹³⁶
 Its own doings.
 In the end will they
 Return to their Lord,
 And We shall then

١٠٨- وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ
 يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
 فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا
 بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ
 كَذَلِكَ زَيَّنَّا
 لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ
 ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ

935 God's Plan is to use the human will to co-operate in understanding Him and His relations to us. This is the answer to an objector who might say: "If He is All-powerful, why does sin or evil exist in the world? Can He not destroy it?" He can, but His Plan is different, and in any case it is not for a Teacher to force any one to accept the truths which he is inspired to preach and proclaim.

936. A man's actual personal religion depends upon many things,—his personal psychology, the background of his life, his hidden or repressed feelings, tendencies, or history (which psycho-analysis tries to unravel), his hereditary dispositions or antipathies, and all the subtle influences of his education and his environment. The task before the man of God is (1) to use any of these which can subserve the higher ends, (2) to purify such as have been misused, (3) to introduce new ideas and modes of looking at things, and (4) to combat what is wrong and cannot be mended: all for the purpose of leading to the truth and gradually letting in spiritual light where there was darkness before. If that is not done with discretion and the skill of a spiritual Teacher, there may be not only a reaction of obstinacy, but an unseemly show of dishonour to the true God and His Truth and doubts would spread among the weaker brethren whose faith is shallow and infirm. What happens to individuals is true collectively of nations or groups of people. They think in their self-obsession that their own ideas are right. God in His infinite compassion bears with them, and asks those who have purer ideas of faith not to vilify the weaknesses of their neighbours, lest the neighbours in their turn vilify the real truth and make matters even worse than before. In so far as there are mistakes, God will forgive and send His grace for helping ignorance and folly. In so far as there is active evil, He will deal with it in His own way. Of course the righteous man must not hide his light under a bushel, or compromise with evil, or refuse to establish right living where he has the power to do so.

Tell them the truth
Of all that they did.

109. **They** swear their strongest
Oaths by God, that if
A (special) Sign came
To them, by it they would
Believe. Say : " Certainly
(All) Signs are in the power
Of God : but what will
Make you (Muslims) realise
That (even) if (special) Signs
Came, they will not believe " ?⁹³⁷

110. We (too) shall turn
To (confusion) their hearts⁹³⁸
And their eyes, even as they
Refused to believe in this
In the first instance :
We shall leave them
⁷ In their trespasses,
³⁰ To wander in distraction.⁹³⁹

قُيِّنَتْ لَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ٥

١٠٩- وَأَقْسَمُوا
بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ
لَئِنْ جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ
لَيُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهَا
قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ
أَنَّهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَتْ
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥

١١٠- وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ
وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ٥

١٠٩
١١٠

937. If the Unbelievers are merely obstinate, nothing will convince them. There is no story more full of miracles than the story of Jesus. Yet in that same story we are told that Jesus said: "A wicked adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas": Matt. xvi. 4. There are Signs given by God every day—understood by those who believe. A mere insistence upon some particular or special Sign means mere contumacy and misunderstanding of the spiritual world.

938. Where there is sheer obstinacy and ridicule of faith, the result will be that such a sinner's heart will be hardened and his eyes will be sealed, so that he cannot even see the things visible to ordinary mortals. The sinner gathers impetus in his descent towards wrong.

939. Cf. ii. 15. God's grace is always ready to help human weakness or ignorance, and to accept repentance and give forgiveness. But where the sinner is in actual rebellion, he will be given rope, and it will be his own fault if he wanders about distracted, without any certain hope or refuge.

- C. 80.—Those in obstinate rebellion
(vi. 111-129.) Against God are merely deceived
And deceive each other. Leave them
Alone, but trust and obey God
Openly and in the inmost recesses
Of your heart. The plots of the wicked
Are but plots against their own souls.

SECTION 14.

111. Even if We did send
Unto them angels,
And the dead did speak
Unto them, and We gathered
Together all things before⁹⁴⁰
Their very eyes, they are not
The ones to believe,
Unless it is in God's Plan.
But most of them
Ignore (the truth).

١١١- وَلَوْ أَنَّمَا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَى
وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا
مَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ
وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَجْهَلُونَ ○

الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ

112. Likewise did We make
For every Messenger
An enemy,—evil ones⁹⁴¹
Among men and Jinns,
Inspiring each other
With flowery discourses
By way of deception.
If thy Lord had so planned,
They would not have
Done it : so leave them
And their inventions alone.

١١٢- وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ
عَدُوًّا شَاطِئِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ
يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ
زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا
وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ
فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ○

113. To such (deceit)
Let the hearts of those
Incline, who have no faith
In the Hereafter : let them
Delight in it, and let them
Earn from it what they may.⁹⁴²

١١٣- وَلِتَصْغَى إِلَيْهِ أَفْئِدَةُ الَّذِينَ
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ
وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا مَا هُمْ مُقْتَرِفُونَ ○

940. The most stupendous miracles even according to their ideas would not have convinced them. If the whole pageant of the spiritual world were brought before them, they would not have believed, because they—of their own choice and will—refuse knowledge and faith.

941. What happened in the history of the Holy Prophet happens in the history of all righteous men who have a Message from God. The spirit of evil is ever active and uses men to practise deception by means of highly embellished words and plausible excuses and objections. God permits these things in His Plan. It is not for us to complain. Our faith is tested, and we must stand the test steadfastly.

942. People who have no faith in the future destiny of man may listen to and be taken in by the deceit of evil. If they take a delight in it, let them. See what they gain by it. Their gains will be as deceitful as their delight. For the end of evil must be evil.

114. Say : " Shall I seek
For judge other than God ?—
When He it is
Who hath sent unto you
The Book, explained in detail." ⁹⁴³
They know full well,
To whom We have given
The Book, that it hath been
Sent down from thy Lord
In truth. Never be then
Of those who doubt.

115. The Word of thy Lord
Doth find its fulfilment
In truth and in justice :
None can change His Words :
For He is the one Who
Heareth and knoweth all.

116. Wert thou to follow
The common run of those
On earth, they will lead
Thee away from the Way
Of God. They follow
Nothing but conjecture : they
Do nothing but lie.

117. Thy Lord knoweth best
Who strayeth from His Way :
He knoweth best
Who they are that receive
His guidance.

118. So eat of (meats)
On which God's name
Hath been pronounced,
If ye have faith
In His Signs.

119. Why should ye not
Eat of (meats) on which
God's name hath been
Pronounced, when He hath
Explained to you in detail
What is forbidden to you—

١١٤- أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ ابْتَغَىٰ حَكَمًا
وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ
الْكِتَابَ مُفَصَّلًا
وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ
يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ مُنْزَلٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ
فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ○

١١٥- وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ
صِدْقًا وَعَدًا لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ
وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

١١٦- وَإِنْ تَطِعْ أَكْثَرُ مَن فِي الْأَرْضِ
يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
إِنْ يَكْفُرُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ
وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ○

١١٧- إِنْ رَأَيْتَ رِبًّا هُوَ أَعْلَمُ
مَنْ يَضِلُّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ
وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ○

١١٨- فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِّرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ بِآيَاتِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ ○

١١٩- وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِّرَ اسْمُ
اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ
وَقَدْ فَضَّلَ لَكُم مَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ

943. The righteous man seeks no other standard of judgment but God's Will. How can he when God in His grace has explained His Will in the Qur-an, with details which men of every capacity can understand? The humblest can learn lessons of right conduct in daily life, and the most advanced can find the highest wisdom in its spiritual teaching, enriched as it is with all kinds of beautiful illustrations from nature and the story of man.

Except under compulsion ⁹⁴⁴
Of necessity ?
But many do mislead (men)
By their appetites unchecked
By knowledge. Thy Lord
Knoweth best those who
transgress.

120. Eschew all sin,
Open or secret :
Those who earn sin
Will get due recompense
For their "earnings."

121. Eat not of (meats)
On which God's name
Hath not been pronounced :
That would be impiety.
But the evil ones
Ever inspire their friends
To contend with you
If ye were to obey them,
Ye would indeed be Pagans.

SECTION 15.

122. Can he who was dead, ⁹⁴⁵
To whom We gave life,
And a Light whereby
He can walk amongst men,
Be like him who is
In the depths of darkness,
From which he can
Never come out ?
Thus to those without Faith
Their own deeds seem pleasing.

123. Thus have We placed
Leaders in every town,

إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرَرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ
وَرَأَى كَثِيرٌ أَلْيَضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَاءِهِمْ
بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ
١٢٠- وَذُرُوا ظَاهِرَ الْأَثَمِ وَبَاطِنَهُ
إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ الْأَثَمَ
سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَقْتَرِفُونَ

١٢١- وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا
مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ
وَرَأَى لَفْسَقٌ وَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ
لَيُؤْخِرُ إِلَى أُولِيئِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ
وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ

١٢٢- أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ
وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ
كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ
لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا
كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

١٢٣- وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكْبَرًا

944. Cf. v. 4. When a clear law has explained what is lawful and unlawful in food, it is wrong to raise fresh scruples and mislead the ignorant.

945. Here is an allegory of the good man with his divine mission and the evil man with his mission of evil. The former, before he got his spiritual life, was like one dead. It was God's grace that gave him spiritual life, with a Light by which he could walk and guide his own footsteps as well as the footsteps of those who are willing to follow God's light. The opposite type is that which hates God's light, which lives in the depths of darkness, and which plots and burrows against all that is good. But the plots of evil recoil on itself, although it thinks that they will hurt the good. Can these two types be for a moment compared with each other? Perhaps the lead in every centre of population is taken by the men of evil. But the good men should not be discouraged. They should work in righteousness and fulfil their mission.

Its wicked men, to plot
(And burrow) therein :
But they only plot
Against their own souls,
And they perceive it not.

124. When there comes to them
A Sign (from God),
They say : " We shall not
Believe until we receive
One (exactly) like those
Received by God's apostles." ⁹⁴⁶
God knoweth best where
(And how) to carry out
His mission. Soon
Will the wicked
Be overtaken by
Humiliation before God,
And a severe punishment,
For all their plots.

125. Those whom God (in His Plan)
Willeth to guide,—He openeth ⁹⁴⁷
Their breast to Islam ;
Those whom He willeth
To leave straying,—He maketh
Their breast close and constricted,
As if they had to climb
Up to the skies : thus
Doth God (heap) the penalty
On those who refuse to believe.

126. This is the Way
Of thy Lord, leading straight :

تُجْرِمِينَ لِيَتَذَكَّرُوا فِيهَا
وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ إِلَّا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ○

١٢٤- وَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ
قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّى نُؤْتَى
مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ ۚ
اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ
سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ
اللَّهِ
عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ لِّمَا كَانُوا يَتَكْبَرُونَ ○

١٢٥- فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ
يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ
يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا
كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ
كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

١٢٦- وَهَذَا صِرَاطٌ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

946. Besides the teaching in God's Word, and the teaching in God's world, of nature and history and human contacts, many Signs come to the men of God, which they humbly receive and try to understand ; and many Signs also come to the ungodly, in the shape of warnings or otherwise, which the ungodly either do not heed, or deliberately reject. The Signs in the two cases are not the same, and that becomes one of their perverse arguments against Faith. But God's working will be according to His own Will and Plan, and not according to the wishes or whims of the ungodly.

947. God's Universal Plan is the *Qadhā wa Qadr*, which is so much misunderstood. That Plan is unalterable, and that is His Will. It means that in the spiritual world, as in the physical world, there are laws of justice, mercy, grace, penalty, etc., which work as surely as anything we know. If, then, a man refuses faith, becomes a rebel, with each step he goes further and further down, and his pace will be accelerated ; he will scarcely be able to take spiritual breath, and his recovery—in spite of God's mercy which he has rejected,—will be as difficult as if he had to climb up to the skies. On the other hand, the godly will find, with each step, the next step easier. Jesus expressed this truth paradoxically : " He that hath, to him shall be given : and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath " : Mark. iv. 25. John (vi. 65) makes Jesus say : " No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

We have detailed the Signs
For those who
Receive admonition.

127. For them will be a Home
Of Peace in the presence
Of their Lord : He will be
Their Friend, because
They practised (righteousness).

128. One day will He gather
Them all together, (and say) :
"O ye assembly of Jinns !⁹⁴⁹
Much (toll) did ye take
Of men." Their friends
Amongst men will say :
"Our Lord ! we made profit⁹⁵⁰
From each other : but (alas !)
We reached our term—
Which Thou didst appoint
For us." He will say :
"The Fire be your dwelling-place :
You will dwell therein for ever,
Except as God willeth."⁹⁵¹
For thy Lord is full
Of wisdom and knowledge.

129. Thus do We make
The wrong-doers turn
To each other, because
Of what they earn.⁹⁵²

قَدْ فَضَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَكْفُرُونَ

١٢٧- لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ
بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

١٢٨- وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا
يَمْعَشِرُ الْجِنَّ
قَدْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ
وَقَالَ أَوْلِيُّهُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ
رَبَّنَا اسْتَنْتِعْ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ
وَبَلَّغْنَا أَجَلَنَا الَّذِي أَجَلْتَ لَنَا
قَالَ النَّارُ مَثْوَاكُمْ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ

١٢٩- وَكَذَلِكَ نُؤَيِّ بِعُضِّ الظَّالِمِينَ
بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

C. 81.—God punishes not mere shortcoming :
(vi. 130-150.) There are degrees in good and evil
Deeds. God is Merciful, but
His Plan is sure, and none
Can stand in its way. We must
Avoid all superstition, and all excess,
And humbly ask for His guidance.

949. Jinns are spirits—here evil spirits. See vi. 100, n. 929.

950. It is common experience that the forces of evil make an alliance with each other, and seem thus to make a profit by their mutual log-rolling. But this is only in this material world. When the limited term expires, their unholy bargains will be exposed, and there will be nothing but regrets.

951. Eternity and infinity are abstract terms. They have no precise meaning in our human experience. The qualification, "except as God willeth," makes it more intelligible, as we can form some ideal—however inadequate—of a Will and Plan, and we know God by His attribute of Mercy as well as of Justice.

952. See n. 950 above. Evil consorts with evil because of their mutual bargains. But in doing so they save the righteous from further temptation.

SECTION 16.

130. "O ye assembly of Jinns
And men ! came there not
Unto you apostles from
amongst you, ⁹⁵³
Setting forth unto you
My Signs, and warning you
Of the meeting of this Day
Of yours ? " They will say :
" We bear witness against
Ourselves." It was
The life of this world
That deceived them. So
Against themselves will they
Bear witness that they
Rejected Faith.
131. (The apostles were sent) thus,
For thy Lord would not
Destroy for their wrong-doing
Men's habitations whilst
Their occupants were unwarned.
132. To all are degrees (or ranks) ⁹⁵⁴
According to their deeds :
For thy Lord
Is not unmindful
Of anything that they do.
133. Thy Lord is Self-sufficient, ⁹⁵⁵
Full of Mercy : if it were
His Will, He could destroy
You, and in your place
Appoint whom He will
As your successors, even as
He raised you up
From the posterity
Of other people.

١٣٠-يَعْتَصِرُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ
أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ
يَقْضُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي
وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا
قَالُوا شَهِدْنَا عَلَى أَنْفُسِنَا
وَعَرَّيْنَاهُمُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
وَشَهِدُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ
أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ ○

١٣١-ذَلِكَ أَن لَّمْ يَكُنْ عَرَبُكَ مُهْلِكَ
الْقُرَى بِظُلْمٍ
وَأَهْلُهَا غَافِلُونَ ○

١٣٢-وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا
وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ
عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٣٣-وَرَبُّكَ الْغَنِيُّ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ
إِنْ يَشَاءْ يُدْهِبْكُمْ
وَيَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنْ بَعْدِكُمْ
مَّا يَشَاءُ كَمَا أَنشَأَكُمُ
مِّن ذُرِّيَّةٍ قَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ ○

953. "Apostles from amongst you." This is addressed to the whole gathering of men and Jinns. Are the Jinns but disembodied spirits of evil men ?

954. On good and evil there are infinite degrees, in our deeds and motives ; so will there be degrees in our spiritual position. For everything is known to God, better than it is to ourselves.

955. God is not dependent on our prayer or service. It is out of His Mercy that He desires our own good. Any race or people to whom He gives chances should understand that its failure does not affect God. He could create others in their place, as He did in times past, and is doing in our own day, if only we had the wit to see it.

134. All that hath been ⁹⁵⁶
Promised unto you
Will come to pass :
Nor can ye frustrate it
(In the least bit).

۱۳۴- إِنْ مَا تُوْعَدُونَ لَا ئَ
وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُغَيِّرِينَ ○

135. Say : " O my people !
Do whatever ye can : ⁹⁵⁷
I will do (my part) :
Soon will ye know
Who it is whose end
Will be (best) in the Hereafter :
Certain it is that
The wrong-doers will not prosper."

۱۳۵- قُلْ يَقُومِ أَعْمَلُوا عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ
إِنِّي عَامِلٌ ۚ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ
مَنْ يَكُونُ لَهُ عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ
إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ ○

136. Out of what God
Hath produced in abundance
In tilth and in cattle,
They assigned Him a share :
They say, according to their
fancies : ⁹⁵⁸
" This is for God, and this "—
For Our " partners " !
But the share of their " partners "
Reacheth not God, whilst
The share of God reacheth
Their " partners " ! Evil
(And unjust) is their assignment !

۱۳۶- وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ مِمَّا ذَرَأَ مِنَ الْحَرْثِ وَ
الْأَنْعَامِ
نَصِيبًا فَقَالُوا هَذَا لِلَّهِ بِزَعْمِهِمْ
وَهَذَا لَشُرَكَائِنَا ۚ
فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَائِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَمَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ فَهُمْ يَصِلُ إِلَىٰ شُرَكَائِهِمْ
سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ○

956. Both the good news and the warning which God's apostles came to give will be fulfilled. Nothing can stop God's Universal Plan. See n. 947 to vi. 125.

957. In so far as this is addressed to the Unbelievers it is a challenge : " Do your utmost ; nothing will deter me from my duty : we shall see who wins in the end." Passing from the particular occasion, we can understand it in a more general sense, which is true for all time. Let the evil ones do their worst. Let those who believe do all they can, according to their opportunities and abilities. The individual must do the straight duty that lies before him. In the end God will judge, and His judgment is always true and just.

958. There is scathing sarcasm here, which some of the Commentators have missed. The Pagans have generally a big Pantheon, though above it they have a vague idea of a Supreme God. But the material benefits go to the godlings, the fancied " partners " of God ; for they have temples, priests, dedication, etc., while the true and supreme God has only lip-worship, or at best a share with numerous " partners ". This was so in Arabia also. The shares assigned to the " partners " went to the priests and hangers-on of the " partners ", who were many and clamorous for their rights. The share assigned to God possibly went to the poor, but more probably went to the priests who had the cult of the " partners ", for the Supreme God had no separate priests of His own. It is also said that when heaps were thus laid out, if any portion of God's heap fell into the heaps of the " partners ", the priests greedily and promptly appropriated it, while in the contrary case, the " partners' " priests were careful to reclaim any portion from what they called " God's heap." The absurdity of the whole thing is ridiculed. God created everything : how can He have a share ?

137. Even so, in the eyes
Of most of the Pagans,⁹⁵⁹
Their "partners" made alluring
The slaughter of their children,
In order to lead them
To their own destruction,
And cause confusion
In their religion.
If God had willed,
They would not have done so :
But leave alone
Them and their inventions.

وَكَذَلِكَ لَكُمْ لِكثِيرٍ مِنَ الشُّرَكِيِّينَ
قَتَلُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ شُرَكَاءَهُمْ لِيُزِدُوهُمْ
وَلِيَلْبِسُوا عَلَيْهِمْ دِينَهُمْ
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
مَا فَعَلُوهُ
فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ○

138. And they say that
Such and such cattle and crops⁹⁶⁰
Are taboo, and none should
Eat of them except those
Whom—so they say—We
Wish ; further, there are
Cattle forbidden to yoke⁹⁶¹
Or burden, and cattle
On which (at slaughter),
The name of God is not⁹⁶²
Pronounced ;—inventions
Against God's name : soon
Will He requite them
For their inventions.

۱۳۸- وَقَالُوا هَذِهِ أَنْعَامٌ وَحَرْتُ رَبِّهَا
لَا يَطْعَمُهَا إِلَّا مَنْ نَشَاءُ
بِرَعْيِهِمْ وَأَنْعَامٌ حُرِّمَتْ ظُهُورُهَا وَ
أَنْعَامٌ
لَا يَذْكُرُونَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا
افْتِرَاءٌ عَلَيْهِ
سَيَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ○

139. They say : " What is
In the wombs of
Such and such cattle
Is specially reserved
(For food) for our men,
And forbidden to our women ;
But if it is still-born,
Then all have shares therein."⁹⁶³

۱۳۹- وَقَالُوا مَا فِي بُطُونِ هَذِهِ الْأَنْعَامِ
خَالِصَةٌ لِّذُنُورِنَا
وَمُحَرَّمٌ عَلَى أَزْوَاجِنَا
وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مَيِّتَةً فَهُمْ فِيهِ شُرَكَاءُ

959. The false gods and idols—among many nations, including the Arabs—were supposed to require human sacrifices. Ordinarily such sacrifices are revolting to man, but they are made "alluring"—a sacred rite—by Pagan custom, which falsely arrogates to itself the name of religion. Such customs, if allowed, would do nothing but destroy the people who practise them, and make their religion but a confused bundle of revolting superstitions.

960. A taboo of certain foods is sometimes a device of the priesthood to get special things for itself. It has to be enforced by pretending that the prohibition for others is by the Will of God. It is a lie or invention against God. Most superstitions are.

961. Cattle dedicated to heathen gods may be reserved from all useful work ; in that case they are a dead loss to the community, and they may, besides, do a great deal of damage to fields and crops.

962. If meat is killed in the name of heathen gods, it would naturally not be killed by the solemn rite in God's name, by which alone the killing can be justified for food. See n. 698 to v. 5.

963. These are further Pagan superstitions about cattle. Some have already been noted in v. 106, which may be consulted with the notes.

For their (false) attribution
(Of superstitions to God),
He will soon punish them :
For He is full
Of wisdom and knowledge.

سَيَجْزِيهِمْ وَصْفَهُمْ
إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ

140. Lost are those who slay
Their children, from folly,
Without knowledge, and forbid
Food which God hath provided
For them, inventing (lies)
Against God. They have
Indeed gone astray
And heeded no guidance.

۱۴۰- قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ سَفَهًا
بَغْيَ عِلْمٍ وَحَرَمُوا مَا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ
افْتَرَاءً عَلَى اللَّهِ
قَدْ ضَلُّوا وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ۝

SECTION 17.

141. It is He who produceth⁹⁶⁴
Gardens, with trellises
And without, and dates,
And tilth with produce
Of all kinds, and olives
And pomegranates,
Similar (in kind)
And different (in variety) :⁹⁶⁵
Eat of their fruit
In their season, but render
The dues that are proper
On the day that the harvest
Is gathered. But waste not⁹⁶⁶
By excess : for God
Loveth not the wasters.

۱۴۱- وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَ جَنَّاتٍ مَعْرُوشَاتٍ
وَأُخْرَىٰ مَعْرُوشَاتٍ وَالظُّحُلَ
وَالزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا أَكْلُهُ وَالزَّيْتُونَ
وَالزَّمَانُ مُمْتَشَابِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ
كُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ
وَاتُوا حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِ ۚ
وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا
إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ۝

142. Of the cattle are some
For burden and some for meat :⁹⁶⁷

۱۴۲- وَمِنْ الْأَنْعَامِ حَمُولَةٌ وَفَرَسَاتٌ

964. *Ansha-a* : see vi. 98, n. 923.

965. A beautiful passage, with music to match the meaning. Cf. vi. 99 and notes.

966. "Waste not, want not," says the English proverb. Here the same wisdom is preached from a higher motive. See what magnificent means God provides in nature for the sustenance of all His creatures, because He loves them all. Enjoy them in moderation and be grateful. But commit no excess and commit no waste : the two things are the same from different angles of vision. If you do, you take away something from other creatures and God would not like your selfishness.

967. Superstition kills true religion. We come back to the Arab Pagan superstitions about cattle for food. The horse is not mentioned, because horse flesh was not an article of diet and there were no superstitions about it. Sheep and goats, camels and oxen were the usual sources of meat. Sheep and goats were not used as beasts of burden, but camels (of both sexes) were used for carrying burdens and oxen for the plough, though cows were mainly used for milk and meat. The words "some for burden and some for meat" do not differentiate whole species, except that they give you the first two and the last two as categories.

Eat what God hath provided
For you, and follow not
The footsteps of Satan :
For he is to you
An avowed enemy.

143. (Take) eight (head of cattle) ⁹⁶⁸
In (four) pairs :
Of sheep a pair,
And of goats a pair ;
Say, hath He forbidden
The two males,
Or the two females,
Or (the young) which the wombs
Of the two females enclose ?
Tell me with knowledge
If ye are truthful :

144. Of camels a pair,
And of oxen a pair ;
Say, hath He forbidden
The two males,
Or the two females,
Or (the young) which the wombs
Of the two females enclose ?—
Were ye present when God
Ordered you such a thing ?
But who doth more wrong
Than one who invents
A lie against God,
To lead astray men
Without knowledge ?
For God guideth not
People who do wrong.

SECTION 18.

145. Say : " I find not
In the Message received
By me by inspiration
Any (meat) forbidden
To be eaten by one
Who wishes to eat it,
Unless it be dead meat,
Or blood poured forth, ⁹⁶⁹

كُلُوا مِن مَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوتَ الشَّيْطَانِ
إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ٥

١٢٣- ثَمَانِيَةَ أَزْوَاجٍ مِّنَ الضَّأْنِ اثْنَيْنِ
وَمِنَ الْمَعْزِ اثْنَيْنِ
قُلْ ءَالِ الذِّكْرِ إِنِ هَؤُلَاءِ
أُمُّ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ
أَمَّا اسْتَمَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ
فَيَعْنُونِي بِعِلْمٍ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ٥
١٢٤- وَمِنَ الْإِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ
وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ
قُلْ ءَالِ الذِّكْرِ إِنِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ
أَمَّا اسْتَمَلْتُ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ
أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ وَضَعَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي بَهْدٍ
فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا
لِّيُضِلَّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥

١٢٥- قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ
مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ
يُطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا
مُسْفُوحًا

968. The superstitions referred to in vi, 139 and v, 106 are further ridiculed in this verse and the next.

969. Blood poured forth : as distinguished from blood adhering to flesh, or the liver, or such other internal organs purifying the blood.

Or the flesh of swine,—
For it is an abomination—
Or, what is impious, (meat)
On which a name has been
Invoked, other than God's."
But (even so), if a person
Is forced by necessity,
Without wilful disobedience,
Nor transgressing due limits,—
Thy Lord is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

146. For those who followed
The Jewish Law, We forbade
Every (animal) with
Undivided hoof,⁹⁷⁰
And We forbade them
The fat of the ox⁹⁷¹
And the sheep, except
What adheres to their backs
Or their entrails,
Or is mixed up
With a bone :
This in recompense
For their wilful disobedience :
For We are True
(In Our ordinances).

147. If they accuse thee
Of falsehood, say :
" Your Lord is full
Of mercy all-embracing ;
But from people in guilt
Never will His wrath
Be turned back."

148. Those who give partners
(To God) will say,

أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيرٍ
فَأَكَلَهُ رَجُسًا أَوْ فَسْقًا
أَهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ
فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ
فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

١٣٦- وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ هَادُوا
حَرَمْنَا كُلَّ ذِي ظُفْرٍ
وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالْغَنَمِ
حَرَمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ شَحُومَهُمَا
إِلَّا مَا حَمَلَتْ ظُهُورُهُمَا
أَوِ الْحَوَايَا أَوْ مَا اخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ
ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ نَفْسٍ بِبَعْضِهَا
وَلَنَا لَصَدُوقُونَ ○

١٣٧- فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ رَبُّكُمْ
ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَاسِعَةٍ
وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُهُ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ○

١٣٨- سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا

970. *Zufur* may mean claw or hoof ; it is in the singular number ; but as no animal has a single claw, and there is no point in a division of claws, we must look to a hoof for the correct interpretation. In the Jewish Law (Leviticus, xi, 3-6), "Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts" was lawful as food, but the camel, the coney (rabbit), and the hare were not lawful, because they do not "divide the hoof." "Undivided hoof" therefore is the correct interpretation. These three animals, unlawful to the Jews, are lawful in Islam. Cf. iv. 160.

971. In Leviticus (vii, 23) it is laid down that "Ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat." As regards the exceptions, it is to be noticed that priests were enjoined (Leviticus, vii, 6) to eat of the fat in the trespass offering, which was considered holy, viz., "the rump" (back and bone) "and the fat that covereth the inwards" (entrails). (Leviticus, vii, 3).

"If God had wished,
We should not have
Given partners to Him,
Nor would our fathers ;
Nor should we have had ⁹⁷²
Any taboos." So did
Their ancestors argue
Falsely, until they tasted
Of Our wrath. Say :
"Have ye any (certain)
Knowledge ? If so, produce
It before us. Ye follow
Nothing but conjecture :
Ye do nothing but lie."

149. Say : "With God is the
argument ⁹⁷³
That reaches home : if it had
Been His Will, He could
Indeed have guided you all."

150. Say : "Bring forward your
witnesses
To prove that God did
Forbid so and so." If they
Bring such witnesses,
Be not thou amongst them : ⁹⁷⁴
Nor follow thou the vain
Desires of such as treat
Our Signs as falsehoods,
And such as believe not
In the Hereafter : for they
Hold others as equal
With their Guardian-Lord. ⁹⁷⁵

لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا
وَلَا حَرَمْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ
كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
حَتَّى دَأَوْنَا بِأَسْنَانَا
قُلْ هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَا
إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ
وَلَا أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَخْرُصُونَ ○

١٢٩- قُلْ فَوَلِّلِ الْحُجَّةَ الْبَالِغَةَ
فَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهْدَكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ○

١٥٠- قُلْ هَاتُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ
الَّذِينَ يَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ هَذَا
فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَلَا تَشْهَدْ مَعَهُمْ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ
وَهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ۝

C. 82.—God's commands are not irrational
(vi. 151-165.) Taboos, but based on the moral law,
And conformable to reason. His Way

972. As used by the Pagans, the argument is false, for it implies (a) that men have no personal responsibility, (b) that they are the victims of a Determinism against which they are helpless, and (c) that they might therefore go on doing just what they liked. It is also inconsistent, for if (b) is true, (c) cannot be true. Nor is it meant to be taken seriously.

973. On the other hand, the argument cuts true and deep, as from God to His creatures: God is Omnipotent, and can do all that we can conceive. But He, in His Plan, has given man some responsibility, and some choice in order to train man's will. If man fails, he is helped in various ways by God's mercy and grace. But man cannot go on sinning, and, in a state of sin, expect God to be pleased with him (vi. 147).

974. The Pagan superstitions were of course baseless, and in many cases harmful and debasing. If God's name was taken as supporting them, no true man of God could be taken in, or join in support simply because God's name was taken in vain.

975. Cf. vi. 1. God who created and who cherishes and cares for all, should have the first claim on our attention. Those who set up false gods fail to understand God's true governance or their own true destiny

Is the straight Way, of justice and truth,
In unity and faith must we dedicate
All our life to His service, and His
Alone, to Whom we shall return.

SECTION 19.

151. Say : " Come, I will rehearse
What God hath (really) ⁹⁷⁶
Prohibited you from " : join not
Anything as equal with Him ;
Be good to your parents ;
Kill not your children
On a plea of want ;— We
Provide sustenance for you
And for them ;— come not
Nigh to shameful deeds,
Whether open or secret ;
Take not life, which God
Hath made sacred, except
By way of justice and law : ⁹⁷⁷
Thus doth He command you,
That ye may learn wisdom.

۱۵۱- قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي عَلَيْكُمْ
أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا
وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا
وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْلَاقٍ
مَحْنٍ نَزَعُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا
الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ
وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ
ذَلِكَمُ وَطَعْمُكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ○

152. And come not nigh
To the orphan's property,
Except to improve it,
Until he attain the age
Of full strength ; give measure
And weight with (full) justice ;—
No burden do We place
On any soul, but that
Which it can bear ;—
Whenever ye speak, speak justly,

۱۵۲- وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ
إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ
وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ
لَا تَكْلِفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا
وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدُوا

976. Instead of following Pagan superstitions, and being in constant terror of imaginary taboos and prohibitions, we should study the true moral law, whose sanction is God's Law. The first step is that we should recognise that He is the One and Only Lord and Cherisher. The mention of goodness to parents immediately afterwards suggests : (1) that God's love of us and care for us may—on an infinitely higher plane—be understood by our ideal of parental love, which is purely unselfish : (2) that our first duty among our fellow creatures is to our father and mother, whose love leads us to the conception of divine love. Arising from that is the conception of our converse duties to our children. God provides sustenance (material and spiritual) not only for us, but for them ; hence any custom like the Pagan custom of sacrificing children to Moloch stands condemned. Then come the moral prohibitions against lewdness and all unseemly acts, relating to sex or otherwise, open or secret. This is followed by the prohibition of killing or fighting. All these things are conformable to our own interests, and therefore true wisdom from our own point of view.

977. For the comprehensive word *haqq* I have used the two words " justice and law " : other significations implied are : right, truth, what is becoming, etc. It is not only that human life is sacred, but all life is sacred. Even in killing animals for food, a dedicatory formula " in the name of God " has to be employed, to make it lawful : see n. 698 to v. 5, and n. 962 to vi. 138.

Even if a near relative
Is concerned ; and fulfil
The Covenant of God :⁹⁷⁸
Thus doth He command you,
That ye may remember.

153. Verily, this is My Way,
Leading straight : follow it :
Follow not (other) paths :
They will scatter you about
*From His (great) Path :
Thus doth He command you,
That ye may be righteous.⁹⁷⁹

154. Moreover, We gave Moses
The Book, completing
(Our favour) to those
Who would do right,
And explaining all things⁹⁸⁰
In detail,—and a guide
And a mercy, that they
Might believe in the meeting
With their Lord.

SECTION 20.

155. And this is a Book
Which We have revealed
As a blessing : so follow it
And be righteous, that ye
May receive mercy :

156. Lest ye should say :
"The Book was sent down
To two Peoples before us,
And for our part, we
Remained unacquainted"⁹⁸¹

وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ
وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوفُوا
ذِكْرُكُمْ وَضَعَكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٥

١٥٣- وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ
سَبِيلِهِ

ذِكْرُكُمْ وَضَعَكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ٥

١٥٤- ثُمَّ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ تَمَامًا
عَلَى الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ
وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً
لِّعَلَّاهُمْ يَلْقَاءَ رَبَّهُمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥

١٥٥- وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ
وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ٥

١٥٦- أَنْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ عَلَى
طَائِفَتَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا وَإِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ

978. Cf. v, 1, and n. 682.

979. Not again the triple refrain with variations, in vi, 151, 152, and 153. In verse 151, we have the moral law, which it is for our own good to follow : " Thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom." In verse 152, we have to deal justly and rightly with others ; we are apt to think too much of ourselves and forget others : " Thus doth He command you, that ye may remember." In verse 153 our attention is called to the Straight Way, the Way, of God, the only Way that leads to righteousness : " Thus doth He command you, that ye may be righteous."

980. The revelation to Moses went into the details of people's lives, and thus served as a practical guide to the Jews and after them to the Christians. Admittedly the Message delivered by Christ dealt with general principles only and in no way with details. The Message of Islam as in the Qur-an is the next complete guide in point of time after that of Moses.

981. Because the diligent studies of the earlier People of the Book were in languages foreign to the new People of Islam, or because they were meant for circumstances different from those of the new world after Islam.

With all that they learned
By assiduous study ;”

157. Or lest ye should say :
“ If the Book had only
Been sent down to us,
We should have followed
Its guidance better than they.”
Now then hath come
Unto you a Clear (Sign) ⁹⁸²
From your Lord,—and a guide
And a mercy : then who
Could do more wrong
Than one who rejecteth
God’s Signs, and turneth
Away therefrom ? In good time
Shall We require those
Who turn away from Our Signs,
With a dreadful penalty,
For their turning away.

158. Are they waiting to see
If the angels come to them,
Or thy Lord (Himself),
Or certain of the Signs
Of thy Lord !
The day that certain
Of the Signs of thy Lord
Do come, no good
Will it do to a soul ⁹⁸³
To believe in them then,
If it believed not before
Nor earned righteousness
Through its Faith. Say :
“ Wait ye : we too
Are waiting.” ⁹⁸⁴

دَرَّاسَتِهِمْ لَغَفْلِينَ ۝

١٥٧- أَوْ تَقُولُوا لَوْ أَنَّا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْكِتَابُ
لَكُنَّا أَهْدَىٰ مِنْهُمْ
فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ
فَمَن أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَصَدَفَ عَنْهَا
سَنَجْزِي الَّذِينَ يَصْدِفُونَ عَن آيَاتِنَا
سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يُصَدِّفُونَ ۝

١٥٨- هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ
الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ رَبُّكَ
أَوْ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ
يَوْمَ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ
لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا
لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِن قَبْلُ
أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيمَانِهَا خَيْرًا
قُلِ انظُرُوا إِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُونَ ۝

982. The Qur-an and the life and the teaching of Muḥammad the Apostle of God.

983. There is no merit in faith in things that you are compelled to acknowledge when they actually happen. Faith is belief in things which you do not see with your eyes but you understand with your spiritual sense : if your whole will consents to it, it results in deeds of righteousness, which are the evidence of your faith.

984. The waiting in the two cases is in quite different senses : the foolish man without faith is waiting for things which will not happen, and is surprised by the real things which do happen ; the righteous man of faith is waiting for the fruits of righteousness, of which he has an assured hope ; in a higher state of spiritual elevation, even the fruits have no personal meaning to him, for God is to him all-in-all ; vi, 162.

159. As for those who divide⁹⁸⁵
 Their religion and break up
 Into sects, thou hast
 No part in them in the least :
 Their affair is with God :
 He will in the end
 Tell them the truth
 Of all that they did.

160. He that doeth good
 Shall have ten times
 As much to his credit :
 He that doeth evil
 Shall only be recompensed
 According to his evil.⁹⁸⁶
 No wrong shall be done
 Unto (any of) them.

161. Say : " Verily, my Lord
 Hath guided me to
 A Way that is straight,—
 A religion of right,—
 The Path (trod) by Abraham
 The true in faith,
 And he (certainly)
 Joined not gods with God."

162. Say : " Truly, my prayer
 And my service of sacrifice,
 My life and my death,
 Are (all) for God,
 The Cherisher of the Worlds :

163. No partner hath He :
 This am I commanded,
 And I am the first
 Of those who bow
 To His Will.

164. Say : " Shall I seek
 For (my) Cherisher

١٥٩- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شُعَبًا
 كُنْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ
 إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ
 ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ○

١٦٠- مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَثْمَالٍ
 وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ
 فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا
 وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ○

١٦١- قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَىٰ رَبِّي إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ
 مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قَبِيلاً
 مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا
 وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○

١٦٢- قُلْ إِن صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي
 وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي
 لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

١٦٣- لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ
 وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ
 وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ○

١٦٤- قُلْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ أُنِيبُوا رَبَّكُمْ

985. *Divide their religion: farraqu* : i.e., (1) make a distinction between one part of it and another, take the part which suits them and reject the rest ; or (2) have religion one day of the week and the world the rest of the six days ; or (3) keep "religion in its right place," as if it did not claim to govern the whole life ; make a sharp distinction between the secular and the religious ; or (4) show a sectarian bias, seek differences in views, so as to break up the unity of Islam.

986 God is just as well as generous. To the good the reward is multiplied ten times (i.e., far above merits) on account of His generosity. To the evil, the punishment is no more than commensurate with their sin, and even so the door of mercy is always open to those who sincerely repent and show it by their conduct.

Other than God,
When He is the Cherisher
Of all things (that exist) ?
Every soul draws the meed
Of its acts on none⁹⁸⁷
But itself : no bearer
Of burdens can bear
The burden of another.
Your goal in the end
Is towards God : He will tell
You the truth of the things
Wherein ye disputed."

165. It is He Who hath made
You (His) agents, inheritors⁹⁸⁸
Of the earth : He hath raised
You in ranks, some above
Others : that He may try you
In the gifts He hath given you :
For thy Lord is quick
In punishment : yet He
Is indeed Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا
وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ
ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ مَرْجِعُكُمْ
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

١٦٥- وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ
وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ
لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ
وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ



987. The doctrine of personal responsibility again. We are fully responsible for our acts ourselves ; we cannot transfer the consequences to someone else. Nor can any one vicariously atone for our sins. If people have honest doubts or differences about important questions of religion, they should not start futile disputes. All will be clear in the end. Our duty here is to maintain unity and discipline, and do the duty that comes to us.

988. Cf. ii. 30 and n. where I have translated "Khalifa" as "Vicegerent", it being God's Plan to make Adam (as representing mankind) His vicegerent on earth. In C. 1, I have construed the same word by the word "Agent." Another idea implied in "Khalifa" is that of "successor, heir, or inheritor," i.e., one who has the ultimate ownership after the present possessors, to whom a life-tenancy has been given by the owner, have passed away. In xv. 23 occurs the striking word "heirs" (*warithūn*) as applied to God : "We give life and death, and We are the Heirs (or Inheritors). The same idea occurs in iii. 180, where see n. 485. The translation here attempts to express both the ideas which I understand from the original.

INTRODUCTION TO SURA VII (A'rāf.)

This Sūra is closely connected, both chronologically and in respect of the argument, with the previous Sūra. But it expounds the doctrine of revelation and man's spiritual history by illustrations from Adam onwards, through various Prophets, and the details of Moses's struggles, to the time of the Apostle Muḥammad, in whom God's revelation is completed.

Summary.—The note, "learn from the past," is struck from the very beginning. The opposition of Evil to Good is illustrated by the story of Adam and Iblis. Arrogance leads to rebellion; the rebel is jealous and tempts the natural man, who is warned against deceit and all excess (vii. 1-31, and C. 83).

If the warning is not heeded, the future penalties are indicated, while the privileges and the bliss and peace of the righteous are shown in a picture of the Hereafter, as well as in the power and goodness of God in the world that we see around us (vii. 32-58, and C. 84).

The story of Noah and the Flood, and the stories of Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Lot, and Shu'aib, all point to the lesson that the Prophets were resisted and rejected, but truth triumphed in the end, and evil was humbled, for God's Plan never fails (vii. 59-99, and C. 85).

The story of Moses is told in greater detail, not only in his struggles with Pharaoh, but in his preparation for his mission, and his struggles with his own rebellious people. Even from the time of Moses the coming of the unlettered Apostle was foreshadowed (vii. 100-157, and C. 86).

But the people of Moses frequently lapsed from God's Law as promulgated to them, and transgressed God's Covenant, and they were scattered through the earth in sections (vii. 158-171, and C. 87).

The children of Adam have multiplied, but many of them have rejected truth and go by degrees to destruction in ways that they do not realise. The righteous listen to the Message of God, and serve Him in humility (vii. 172-206, and C. 88).

C. 83.—Revelation should ease the difficulties
(vii. 1-31.) Of heart and mind, for it tells
The story of man's spiritual past,
And teaches the end of good and evil.
Iblis fell from jealousy and arrogance,
And Adam fell because he listened
To his deceit. But God did grant
In his Mercy gifts and guidance
To men, warned them against excess,
And taught them moderation and justice.

Sūra VII.

A'rāf, or The Heights.

In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

1. **Alif, Lām, Mīm, Šād.**⁹⁸⁹
2. **A** Book revealed unto thee,—
So let thy heart be oppressed⁹⁹⁰
No more by any difficulty
On that account,—
That with it thou mightest
Warn (the erring) and teach
The Believers.
3. Follow (O men!) the revelation
Given unto you from your Lord,
And follow not, as friends
Or protectors, other than Him.
Little it is ye remember
Of admonition.⁹⁹¹
4. **How** many towns have We
Destroyed (for their sins)?
Our punishment took them
On a sudden by night
Or while they slept
For their afternoon rest.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْتَصَّ

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ

فَلَا يَكُنْ فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِنْهُ
لِتُنْذِرَ بِهِ

وَذِكْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ

قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

وَكَمْ مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا

فَجَاءَهَا بِأَسْنَابِكِنَا

أَوْ هُمْ قَائِلُونَ

989. This is a combination of four Abbreviated Letters. For Abbreviated Letters generally, see Appendix I (at the end of Sūra II). The combination here includes the three letters A, L, M, which occurred at the beginning of Sūra II, and are discussed in n. 25 to ii. 1.

The additional letter Šād occurs in combination here and in Sūra xix, and by itself at the beginning of S. xxxviii, and nowhere else. The factor common to S. vii, S. xix, and S. xxxviii, is that in each case of core of the Sūra consists in the stories (qisās) of the Prophets. In this Sūra we have the stories of Noah, Hūd, Šaliḥ, Lot, Šuʿaib, and Moses, leading up to Muḥammad, and in S. xxxviii, the stories of David, Solomon, and Job similarly lead up to Muḥammad, occupying three out of the five sections. Sūra xix consists almost entirely of such stories. Can we understand Šād to stand for qisās, of which it is the most characteristic letter? In this Sūra vii, we have also the spiritual history of mankind traced,—the Beginning, the Middle, and the End, which, as explained in n. 25, might be represented symbolically by A, L, M. If so, this Sūra, dealing with the Beginning, Middle, and End of man's spiritual story, and illustrating it by the stories of the Prophets, might well be represented symbolically by the letters *Alif, Lām, Mīm, Šād*. But no one can be dogmatic about these symbols. We must accept them as symbols with a mystic meaning.

990. *Heart*: in the original, *breast*. I have used the word most appropriate to the English idiom. The meaning is that Muḥammad is consoled for all the difficulties which he encountered in his mission, with the fact that he had clear guidance in the Book for his preaching.

991. This is added in order that men might not be puffed up with such little knowledge as they possessed, for there are great heights to be scaled in the spiritual kingdom.

5. When (thus) Our punishment
Took them, no cry
Did they utter but this :
" Indeed we did wrong." ⁹⁹²
6. When shall we question
Those to whom Our Message
Was sent and those by whom ⁹⁹³
We sent it.
7. And verily We shall recount
Their whole story
With knowledge, for We
Were never absent
(At any time or place). ⁹⁹⁴
8. The balance that day
Will be true (to a nicety) :
Those whose scale (of good)
Will be heavy, will prosper :
9. Those whose scale will be light,
Will find their souls
In perdition, for that they
Wrongfully treated Our Signs.
10. It is We Who have
Placed you with authority
On earth, and provided
You therein with means
For the fulfilment of your life : ⁹⁹⁵
Small are the thanks
That ye give !
- ٥- فَمَا كَانَ دَعْوَاهُمْ إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بِأْسُنَا
إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ ○
- ٦- فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ
وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ○
- ٧- فَلَنَقْصُصَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا كَانُوا
فَعَلُوا ○
- ٨- وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ
مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ○
- ٩- وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ
خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ۖ مَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لِيُظِلُّوا ○
- ١٠- وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّاكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَايِشَ
قَلِيلًا مِمَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ○

992. The spiritual story of man begins with a prelude. Think of the towns and nations ruined by their iniquity. God gave them many opportunities, and sent them warners and teachers. But they arrogantly went on in their evil ways, till some dreadful calamity came like a thief in the night and wiped out their traces. In a warm climate the disturbance in the heat of the midday rest is even more than the disturbance at night. It was when the catastrophe came that the people realised their sins, but it was too late.

993. In the final reckoning, the warners and teachers will give evidence of their preaching the truth, and the wicked will themselves have to acknowledge the truth. We picture it like a court scene, when the story is related, but the Judge knows all, even more than the parties can tell.

994. God is never absent from any place or at any time, for Time and Place are relative conceptions for our limited natures, while He is the Absolute, independent of such relative conceptions.

995. That is, all the material things which are necessary to sustain, beautify, and refine life, as well as all those powers, faculties, and opportunities which are instrumental in bringing up life to a higher plane and preparing man for his high spiritual destiny.

. SECTION 2.

11. 'It is We Who created you
And gave you shape ;⁹⁹⁶
Then We bade the angels
Bow down to Adam, and they
Bowed down ; not so Iblis ;
He refused to be of those⁹⁹⁷
Who bow down.

12. (God) said : " What prevented
Thee from bowing down
When I commanded thee ? "
He said : " I am better
Than he : Thou didst create
Me from fire and him from clay."⁹⁹⁸

13. (God) said : " Get thee down
From this :⁹⁹⁹ it is not
For thee to be arrogant
Here get out, for thou
Art of the meanest (of creatures)."

14. He said : " Give me respite
Till the day they are
Raised up."

15. (God) said : " Be thou
Among those who have respite."¹⁰⁰⁰

۱۱- وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ
ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ
فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ
لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ○

۱۲- قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ آلَا تَسْجُدُ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ
قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ
خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ ○

۱۳- قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا
فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَنْ تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا
فَاخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ ○

۱۴- قَالَ أَنْظِرْنِي
إِلَى يَوْمٍ رُبِّعَتُونَ ○

۱۵- قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ ○

996. *Shape* or form must be interpreted not only to refer to the physical form, which changes day by day, but also the various forms or shapes which our ideal and spiritual existence may take from time to time according to our inner experiences : Cf. lxxxii. 8. The original Form or Idea or Pattern, according to Plato's mystic doctrine as developed in his " Republic," may also be compared with the " names " or nature and quality of things, which God taught Adam : Q. ii. 31 and n. 48 ; and vi. 94, n. 916. It was after Adam (as standing for all mankind) had been so taught that the angels were asked to bow down to him, for, by God's grace, his status had actually been raised higher. Note the transition from " you " (plural) in the first clause to " Adam " in the second clause : Adam and mankind are synonymous : the plural is reverted to in vii. 14, 16-18.

997. Iblis not only refused to bow down : he refused to be of those who bowed down. In other words he arrogantly despised the angels who bowed down, as well as man to whom they bowed down ; and he was in rebellion against God for not obeying His order. Arrogance, jealousy, and rebellion were his triple crime.

998. Notice the subtle wiles of Iblis : his egotism in putting himself above man, and his falsehood in ignoring the fact that God had not merely made man's body from clay, but had given him spiritual form,—in other words, had taught him the nature of things and raised him above the angels.

999. " *This* " : the situation as it was then,—a rebellious creature impertinent to His Creator. At every step Iblis falls lower : arrogance, jealousy, disobedience, egotism and untruth.

1000. Are there others under respite ? Yes, Iblis has a large army of wicked seducers, and those men who are their dupes. For though degradation takes effect at once, its appearance may be long delayed.

16. He said : " Because thou
Hast thrown me out ¹⁰⁰¹
Of the Way, lo ! I will
Lie in wait for them
On Thy Straight Way :

١٦- قَالَ فِيمَا أُغْوِيْتَنِي
لَا قُعْدَنَ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝

17. " Then will I assault them
From before them and behind them,
From their right and their left :
Nor wilt Thou find,
In most of them,
Gratitude (for Thy mercies). " ¹⁰⁰²

١٧- ثُمَّ لَا يَبْقَىٰ لَهُمْ مَن بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِمْ وَ
مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ
شَمَائِلِهِمْ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ ۝

18. (God) said : " Get out
From this, disgraced
And expelled. If any
Of them follow thee,—
Hell will I fill
With you all.

١٨- قَالَ اخْرُجْ مِنْهَا مَذْذُومًا مَّدْحُورًا
لَسَنَ تَبْعَكَ مِنْهُمْ
لَا مَلَكٌ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝

19. " ﴿٢٠﴾ Adam ! dwell thou ¹⁰⁰³
And thy wife in the Garden,
And enjoy ¹⁰⁰⁴ (its good things)
As ye wish : but approach not
This tree, or ye run
Into harm and transgression."

١٩- وَيَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ
فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ
الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

20. Then began Satan ¹⁰⁰⁵ to whisper
Suggestions to them, bringing
Openly before their minds
All their shame ¹⁰⁰⁶

٢٠- فَوَسَّسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ
لَهُمَا مَا وَرَىٰ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوَاتِهِمَا

1001. Another instance of Iblis's subtlety and falsehood. He waits till he gets the respite. Then he breaks out into a lie and impertinent defiance. The lie is in suggesting that God had thrown him out of the Way, in other words, misled him; whereas his own conduct was responsible for his degradation. The defiance is in his setting snares on the Straight Way to which God directs men. Iblis now falls a step lower than the five steps mentioned in n. 909. His sixth step is defiance.

1002. The assault of evil is from all sides. It takes advantage of every weak point, and sometimes even our good and generous sympathies are used to decoy us into the snares of evil. Man has every reason to be grateful to God for all His loving care, and yet man in his folly forgets his gratitude and does the very opposite of what he should do.

1003. Now the story turns to man. He was placed in a spiritual Garden of innocence and bliss, but it was God's Plan to give him a limited faculty of choice. All that he was forbidden to do was to approach the Tree of Evil, but he succumbed to Satan's suggestions.

1004. Enjoy : literally, "eat." Cf. the meaning of *ṭa'ama* in vi. 14, n. 847 and *akala* in v. 69, n. 776.

1005. The transition from the name "Iblis" to the name "Satan" is similar to that in ii. 36, where it is explained in n. 52.

1006. Our first parents as created by God (and this applies to all of us) were innocent in matters material as well as spiritual. They knew no evil. But the faculty of choice, which was given to them and which raised them above the angels, also implied that they had the capacity of evil, which by the training of their own will, they were to reject. They were warned of the danger. When they fell, they realised the evil. They were (and we are) still given the chance, in this life on a lower plane, to make good and recover the lost status of innocence and bliss.

That was hidden from them
(Before) : he said " Your Lord
Only forbade you this tree,
Lest ye should become angels
Or such beings as live for ever."

21. And he swore to them
Both, that he was
Their sincere adviser.

22. So by deceit he brought about
Their fall : when they
Tasted of the tree,
Their shame became manifest
To them, and they began
To sew together the leaves
Of the Garden over their bodies.
And their Lord called
Unto them : " Did I not
Forbid you that tree,
And tell you that Satan
Was an avowed
Enemy unto you ? "

23. They said : " Our Lord !
We have wronged our own souls :
If Thou forgive us not
And bestow not upon us
Thy mercy, we shall
Certainly be lost."

24. (God) said : " Get ye down,
With enmity between yourselves.
On earth will be your dwelling-place
And your means of livelihood,—
For a time."

25. He said : " Therein shall ye
Live, and therein shall ye
Die ; but from it shall ye
Be taken out (at last)."¹⁰⁰⁷

وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبِّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ
الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَائِكِينَ أَوْ تَكُونَا
مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ ۝

۲۱- وَقَاسَمَهُمَا إِيَّايَ لَكُمَا لِمَنِ
الْوَصِيَّةُ ۝

۲۲- فَذَلَّلَهُمَا يَتَعَرَّوْا فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ
بَدَّاتَ لَهُمَا سُوءُأَنَّهُمَا
وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفْنَ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ ذُرُقِ
الْجَنَّةِ ۝

وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا
أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُلْتُ
لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ۝

۲۳- قَالَا لَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا
وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا
لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ۝

۲۴- قَالَ اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ
وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ
وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ۝

۲۵- قَالَ فِيهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ
وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُونَ ۝

1007. Cf. this whole passage about Adam with the passage in ii. 30-39, and with other passages in subsequent Sūras. In places the words are precisely the same and yet the whole argument is different. In each case it exactly fits the context. In S. ii. the argument was about the origin of man. Here the argument is a prelude to his history on earth, and so it continues logically in the next section to address the Children of Adam, and goes on afterwards with the story of the various apostles that came to guide mankind. Truth is one, but its apt presentment in human words shows a different facet in different contexts.

SECTION 3.

26. **O** ye Children of Adam !
We have bestowed raiment ¹⁰⁰⁸
Upon you to cover
Your shame, as well as
To be an adornment to you,
But the raiment of righteousness,—
That is the best.
Such are among the Signs
Of God, that they
May receive admonition !

27. **O** ye Children of Adam !
Let not Satan seduce you,
In the same manner as ¹⁰⁰⁹
He got your parents out
Of the Garden, stripping them
Of their raiment, to expose
Their shame : for he
And his tribe watch you
From a position where ye
Cannot see them : We made
The Evil Ones friends
(Only) to those without Faith.

28. **W**hen they do aught
That is shameful, they say :
" We found our fathers
Doing so " ; and " God
Commanded us thus " :
Say : " Nay, God never

٢٦-يَبْنِيْ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا
يُّوَارِيْ سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا
وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوٰى
ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ
ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُوْنَ

٢٧-يَبْنِيْ اٰدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ
كَمَا اَخْرَجَ اٰبَوَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ
يَنْزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْآتِهِمَا
اِنَّهٗ يَرٰكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيْلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا
تَرَوْنَهُمْ اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِيْنَ اَوْلِيَاءَ
لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ

٢٨-وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً
قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَا آبَاءَنَا
وَاللّٰهُ اَمَرْنَا بِهَا قُلْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ

1008. There is a double philosophy of clothes here, to correspond with the double signification of verse 20 above, as explained in n. 1006. Spiritually, God created man "bare and alone" (vi. 94) : the soul in its naked purity and beauty knew no shame because it knew no guilt : after it was touched by guilt and soiled by evil, its thoughts and deeds became its clothing and adornments, good or bad, honest or meretricious, according to the inner motives which gave them colour. So in the case of the body : it is pure and beautiful, as long as it is not defiled by misuse : its clothing and ornaments may be good or meretricious, according to the motives in the mind and character : if good, they are the symbols of purity and beauty : but the best clothing and ornament we could have come from righteousness, which covers the nakedness of sin, and adorns us with virtues. In secular literature, the philosophy of clothes is the theme of Carlyle's "*Sartor Resartus*," but it is strong meat to the novice in literature.

1009. That is by fraud and deceit,—by putting you off your guard and telling lies, Adam's story here becomes an introduction to the later spiritual history of mankind : vii. 20-22. In the Garden Satan's deceit stripped off their raiment of honour and innocence. In this life on a lower plane he seeks to strip us of the raiment of righteousness. And he can take up positions on a vantage ground of worldly power or influence or riches, in which he and his confederates are not seen in their true colours. They may assume a fair-seeming disguise of disinterested friendship or high motives of patriotism or public spirit or loyalty to ancestors, when beneath it there is nothing but spite and selfishness.

Commands what is shameful :
Do ye say of God
What ye know not ?”

29. Say: “ My Lord hath commanded Justice ; and that ye set Your whole selves (to Him) ¹⁰¹⁰ At every time and place Of prayer, and call upon Him, Making your devotion sincere As in His sight : Such as He created you ¹⁰¹¹ In the beginning, so Shall ye return.”

30. Some He hath guided : Others have (by their choice) Deserved the loss of their way : ¹⁰¹² In that they took The Evil Ones, in preference To God, for their friends And protectors, and think That they receive guidance.

31. O Children of Adam ! Wear your beautiful apparel ¹⁰¹³ At every time and place Of prayer : eat and drink : But waste not by excess, For God loveth not the wasters.

بِالتَّحْشَاءِ
أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ
٢٩- قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ
وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ
عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ
وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ ۚ
كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ ۝

٣٠- قَرِيبًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ
الضَّلَالَةُ إِنَّهُمْ اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيَاطِينَ
أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ ۝

٣١- يٰبَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ
كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا
إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ۝

1010. For *wajh*, see ii. 112 and n. 114. Our devotion should be sincere, not as in other men's sight, but by presenting our whole selves, heart and soul, to God. Even so, it may not be enough ; for the sight of our heart and soul may be faulty. We should call upon God to give us the light, by which our sincerity may commend itself to Him as true sincerity " as in His sight ".

1011. Cf. vi. 94. Our sincerity should be real sincerity, as in God's sight ; for when we return to Him, we shall be stripped of all pretence, even such self-deception as may satisfy us in this life.

1012. Guidance is for all. But in some it takes effect ; in others the doors are closed against it, because they have taken Evil for their friend. If they have lost their way, they have richly deserved it ; for they deliberately took their choice, even though, in their self-righteousness, they may think that their sin is their virtue, and that their Evil is their Good.

1013. *Beautiful apparel* : *sinat* : adornments or apparel for beautiful living : construed to mean not only clothes that add grace to the wearer, but toilet and cleanliness, attention to hair, and other small personal details which no self-respecting man or woman ought to neglect when going solemnly even before a great human dignitary, if only out of respect for the dignity of the occasion. How much more important it is to attend to these details when we solemnly apply our minds to the Presence of God, though He is always present everywhere ! But the caution against excess applies ; men must not go to prayer in silks or ornaments appropriate to women. Similarly sober food, good and wholesome, is not to be divorced from officers of religion ; only the caution against excess applies strictly. A dirty, unkempt, slovenly Faqir could not claim sanctity in Islam.

C. 84.—God has forbidden the things :

(vii. 32-58.) That are evil, not those that are good,
 For these were created for man's
 Enjoyment. The transgressors
 Are those who reject God's Signs.
 They will have no share in the Bliss
 Of the Hereafter. But the righteous
 Will dwell in Peace, and the hope
 That was promised will be theirs.

SECTION 4.

32. Say: Who hath forbidden
 The beautiful (gifts) of God, ¹⁰¹⁴
 Which He hath produced
 For His servants,
 And the things, clean and pure,
 (Which He hath provided)
 For sustenance?
 Say: They are, in the life
 Of this world, for those
 Who believe, (and) purely ¹⁰¹⁵
 For them on the Day
 Of Judgment. Thus do We
 Explain the Signs in detail
 For those who understand.

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ
 الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ
 وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّمْقِ
 قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ
 الدُّنْيَا
 خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
 كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

33. Say: The things that my Lord
 Hath indeed forbidden are: ¹⁰¹⁶
 Shameful deeds, whether open
 Or secret; sins and trespasses
 Against truth or reason; assigning
 Of partners to God, for which
 He hath given no authority;
 And saying things about God
 Of which ye have no knowledge.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ
 مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ وَالْإِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ
 بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَأَنْ تُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ
 مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا
 وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

1014. Asceticism often means the negation of art and beauty. It has no necessary sanctity attached to it.

1015. The beautiful and good things of life are really meant for, and should be the privilege of, those with faith in God. If they do not always have them in this life, and if there is sometimes the semblance of others having them who do not deserve them, let us at least consider the matter in another light. Our Faith in God's wisdom is unshaken and we know that these are but fleeting and mixed types of the things in the spiritual world. Their pure counterparts in the spiritual world will be only for those who proved, in all the trials of this world, that they had faith.

1016. The forbidden things are described in four categories: (1) what is shameful or unbecoming; the sort of things which have also legal and social sanctions, not of a local but of a universal kind; they may be called offences against society; (2) sins against self and trespasses or excesses of every sort; these are against truth and reason; here would come in indiscipline, failure in doing intangible duties, not clearly defined by law; selfishness or self-aggrandisement, which may be condoned by custom and not punished by law, etc.; (3) erecting fetishes or false gods; this is treason against the true God; and (4) corrupting religion by debasing superstitions, etc.

34. ~~No~~ Every people is a term¹⁰¹⁷
Appointed: when their term
Is reached, not an hour
Can they cause delay,
Nor (an hour) can they
Advance (it in anticipation).

٢٢ وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ
لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً
وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ۝

35. O ye Children of Adam!
Whenever there come to you
Apostles from amongst you,
Rehearsing My Signs unto you,—
Those who are righteous
And mend (their lives),—
On them shall be no fear
Nor shall they grieve.

٢٣ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ إِنَّا يَا نَبِيِّكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْكُمْ
يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي مُبَيِّنَاتٍ لِّمَنِ الْغَالِبُ وَأَصْلَحْ
فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

36. But those who reject
Our Signs and treat them
With arrogance,—they
Are Companions of the Fire,
To dwell therein (for ever).

٢٤ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِالْآيَاتِ
وَأَسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۝

37. Who is more unjust
Than one who invents
A lie against God
Or rejects His Signs?
For such, their portion¹⁰¹⁸
Appointed must reach them
From the Book (of Decrees):
Until, when Our messengers
(Of death) arrive and take
Their souls, they say:
"Where are the things
That ye used to invoke
Besides God?"
They will reply, "They

٢٥ مَن أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ
كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ
أُولَٰئِكَ يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيبُهُم مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُخَوِّفُونَهُمْ
قَالُوا إِنَّا إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَدْعُونَ
دُونِ اللَّهِ
قَالُوا

1017. People: *ummat*. I do not know whether "generation" would not be more appropriate here. If so, it would refer to the Time-Spirit, for it affects a whole number of people living contemporaneously, and while we deal grammatically with a group, we really have in mind the individuals composing the group. Anyway, the lesson is what is suggested in the following verses. There is only a limited time for an individual or for a group of people. If they do not make good during that time of probation, the chance is lost, and it cannot come again. We cannot retard or advance the march of time by a single hour or minute. ("Hour" in the text expresses an indefinite but short period of time.)

1018. It must not be supposed that the rebels against God would at once be cut off in this life for their sins. They will get the portion allotted to them, including the good things of life and the chance of repentance and reformation, during their probationary period on this earth. During that period they will have a full run. After that period expires, they will be called to account. They will themselves see that the false things in which they put their trust, were false, and they will confess their sin, but it will be too late.

Have left us in the lurch,"
And they will bear witness
Against themselves, that they
Had rejected God.

38. He will say : " Enter ye
In the company of
The Peoples who passed away
Before you—men and Jinns,—
Into the Fire. Every time
•A new People enters,
It curses its sister-People
(That went before), until
They follow each other, all
Into the Fire. Saith the last
About the first : " Our Lord !
It is these that misled us :
So give them a double
Penalty in the Fire."
He will say : " Doubled ¹⁰¹⁹
For all " : but this
Ye do not understand.

39. Then the first will say
To the last : " See then !
No advantage have ye
Over us ; so taste ye
Of the Penalty for all
That ye did ! " ¹⁰²⁰

SECTION 5.

40. ~~No~~ Those who reject
Our Signs and treat them
With arrogance, no opening
Will there be of the gates

ضَلُّوا عَنَّا وَشَهِدُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ
أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ ۝

٣٨- قَالَ ادْخُلُوا فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ
قَبْلِكُمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ
فِي النَّارِ

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا دَارَكُوا فِيهَا جَمِيعًا
قَالَتْ أُوخْرِلُهُمْ لِأُولِهِمْ
رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَاءِ أَضَلُّونَا

فَلَنَنصُرَهُمُ عَذَابًا بَاسًا ضِعْفًا مِّنَ النَّارِ
قَالَ لِكُلِّ ضِعْفٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

٣٩- وَقَالَتْ أُولَهُمْ لِأُوخْرِلِهِمْ
فَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ فَضْلٍ
فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ۝

٤٠- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا
عَنْهَا لَا تَفْتَحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ

1019. The earlier generations committed a double crime : (1) their own sins, (2) the bad example they set for those that followed. We are responsible not only for our own misdeeds, but for those which our example and our teaching to our juniors may induce them to commit. But it does not lie in the mouth of the juniors to ask for a double punishment for seniors : the motive is not justice, but pure spite, which is itself a sin. Further, the later generations have to answer for two things : (1) their own sins, and (2) their failure to learn from the past, from the experiences of those who preceded them. They should have an advantage in this respect, being "in the foremost files of Time," but they did not learn. Thus there was nothing to choose between the earlier and later generations in the matter of guilt. But how few people understand this !

In vi. 160, we were told that good was rewarded tenfold, but evil was punished according to its guilt, in perfect justice. This verse is in no way inconsistent with it. Two crimes must have a double penalty. But we must understand "ten times" and "double" figuratively and not quantitatively.

1020. Wrong-doers have really no sense of honour towards each other. "Honour among thieves" is an exceptional, not an ordinary, experience. In real life, guilt and crime are apt to indulge in mean spite and bitter recriminations against accomplices.

Of heaven, nor will they
Enter the Garden, until
The camel can pass
Through the eye of the needle :
Such is Our reward
For those in sin.

41. For them there is
Hell, as a couch
(Below) and folds and folds
Of covering above : such
Is Our requital of those
Who do wrong.

42. But those who believe
And work righteousness,—
No burden do We place
On any soul, but that
Which it can bear,—
They will be Companions
Of the Garden, therein
To dwell (for ever).

43. And We shall remove
From their hearts any
Lurking sense of injury ;— ¹⁰²¹
Beneath them will be
Rivers flowing ;—and they
Shall say : " Praise be to God,
Who hath guided us
To this (felicity) : never
Could we have found
Guidance, had it not been
For the guidance of God :
Indeed it was the truth
That the Apostles of our Lord
Brought unto us." And they
Shall hear the cry :
" Behold ! the Garden before you !

السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ
حَتَّى يَلْبِغَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ
وَكَذَلِكَ نُجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ ○

٢١- لَهُمْ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ
وَمِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ غَوَاشٍ
وَكَذَلِكَ نُجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٢٢- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا
أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ○

٢٣- وَكَرَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
نُجْزِي مَنْ تَحْتَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْهَارِ
وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ
الَّذِي هَدانا لِهَذَا
وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ
لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدانا اللَّهُ
لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ
وَنُودُوا أَنْ تَبْلُغُوا الْجَنَّةَ

1021. A man who may have suffered or been disappointed may have a lurking sense of injury at the back of his mind, which may spoil his enjoyment on account of past memory intruding in the midst of felicity. In such cases memory itself is pain. Even sorrow is intensified by memory : as Tennyson says, " A sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things ". But that is in this our imperfect life. In the perfect felicity of the righteous, all such feelings will be blotted out. No " heartaches " then and no memories of them ! The clouds of the past will have dissolved in glorious light, and no past happiness will be comparable with the perfect happiness which will have then been attained. Nor will any sense of envy or shortcoming be possible in that perfect bliss.

Ye have been made.¹⁰²²
Its inheritors, (for your
Deeds (of righteousness)."

44. The Companions of the Garden
Will call out to the Companions
Of the Fire: " We have
Indeed found the promises
Of our Lord to us true :
Have you also found
Your Lord's promises true ? "
They shall say, " Yes " ; but ¹⁰²³
A Crier shall proclaim
Between them : " The curse
Of God is on the wrong-doers ;—

45. " Those who would hinder (men)
From the path of God
And would seek in it
Something crooked : ¹⁰²⁴
They were those who
Denied the Hereafter."

46. Between them shall be
A veil, and on the Heights ¹⁰²⁵

أُورِثَ مُوْهَبًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

٣٣- وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ
أَنْ قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا رَبُّنَا حَقًّا
فَهُلْ وَجَدْتُمْ مَا وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا
قَالُوا نَعَمْ
فَإِذَنْ مُّوَدِّنٍ
يَبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ أَنَّ لَعْنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ۝

٣٤- الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا
وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ كَافِرُونَ ۝

٣٥- وَبَيْنَهُمَا حِجَابٌ وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ

1022. Jesus said : " Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth " : Matt. v. 5. Here we are told : blessed are the righteous, for they shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. The stress here is on actual practical deeds of righteousness : whether they find their rewards on earth or not is immaterial : their attention is directed to an infinitely greater reward, the kingdom of heaven. In the Sermon on the Mount this is promised to the " poor in spirit " : Matt. v. 3.

1023. The Companions of the Fire can only answer a single word, " Yes," such is their state of misery. Even so, their voice is drowned in the voice of the Crier, who explains their state ; they are in a state of curse, that is, deprivation of the grace and mercy of God. Such deprivation is the highest misery that souls can suffer.

1024. The unrighteous reflect their own crooked minds when the path of God is before them. Instead of going straight, they try to find something in it that suits their own crooked ideas. Frankly they have no faith in the final Goal, the Hereafter.

1025. This is a difficult passage, and Commentators have interpreted it in different ways. Three distinct schools of thought may be discerned in the interpretation. (1) One school thinks that the men on the Heights are angels, or such men of exalted spiritual dignity (e.g., the great apostles), as will be able to know the souls at sight as regards their spiritual worth : the Heights will be their exalted stations, from which they will welcome the righteous with a salutation of peace, even before the righteous have entered heaven ; the salutation of peace being itself an assurance of salvation to those whom they salute. (2) Another school of thought thinks that the men on the Heights are such souls as are not decidedly on the side of merit or decidedly on the side of sin, but evenly balanced on a partition between heaven and hell. Their case is yet to be decided, but their salutation to the righteous is a wistful salutation, because they hope for God's Mercy. (3) The third line of interpretation, with which I agree, is close to the first, with this exception, that the partition and the Heights are figurative. The higher souls will rejoice at the approaching salvation of the righteous.

Will be men
Who would know every one
By his marks : they will call
Out to the Companions
Of the Garden, " Peace on you " :
They will not have entered,
But they will have
An assurance (thereof).

47. When their eyes ¹⁰²⁶ shall be turned
Towards the Companions
Of the Fire, they will say :
" Our Lord ! send us not
To the company
Of the wrong-doers."

SECTION 6.

48. The men on the Heights
Will call to certain men
Whom they will know
From their marks, saying : ¹⁰²⁷
" Of what profit to you
Were your hoards and your
Arrogant ways ?

49. " Behold ! are these not
The men whom you swore
That God with His Mercy
Would never bless ?
Enter ye the Garden :
No fear shall be on you,
Nor shall ye grieve."

50. The Companions of the Fire
Will call to the Companions
Of the Garden : " Pour down
To us water or anything

رَجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمَاهُمْ
وَنَادَوْا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ
أَنْ سَلِّمْ عَلَيْكُمْ لَمْ يَدْخُلُوهَا
وَهُمْ يَطْمَعُونَ ○

٢٦- وَإِذَا صُرِفَتْ أَبْصَارُهُمْ
تِلْقَاءَ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا
مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

٢٨- وَنَادَى أَصْحَابُ الْأَعْرَافِ رَجَالًا
يَعْرِفُونَهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ
قَالُوا مَا أَغْنَى عَنْكُمْ جَمْعُكُمْ
وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ○

٢٩- أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمْتُمْ
لَا يَنَالُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ
أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ

لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ○
٥- وَنَادَى أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ
أَنْ أَوْضِئُوا عَلَيْنَا مِنْ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مَتَا

1026. *Their eyes* : according to interpretation (2) of the last note, " their " would refer to the people whose fate has not yet been decided, and the speech would be theirs ; according to interpretations (1) and (3) in that note, " their " would refer to the Companions of the Garden, who would realise the terrible nature of hell, and express their horror of it. I prefer the latter. Then the mention of the "men on the Heights" and their speech in verse 48 comes in naturally as a different kind of speech from a different kind of men.

1027. This speech is in three parts : (1) the last lines of this verse are addressed to the Companions of the Fire, reminding them (as a bench of judges might speak to a prisoner) of the futility of their wealth and riches and arrogance in their earthly life ; (2) the second part, in the first half of verse 49, recalls to their minds how false was their contempt of the good but lowly men who are now to be the inheritors of heaven ; and (3) the latter part of verse 49, " enter ye the Garden " is addressed to the Blessed, to give them a welcome to their state of felicity.

That God doth provide
For your sustenance."
They will say : " Both
These things hath God forbidden
To those who rejected Him ;—¹⁰²⁸

51. " Such as took their religion
To be mere amusement
And play, and were deceived
By the life of the world."
That day shall We forget them ¹⁰²⁹
As they forgot the meeting
Of this day of theirs,
And as they were wont
To reject Our Signs.

52. For We had certainly
Sent unto them a Book,
Based on knowledge,
Which We explained
In detail,—a guide
And a mercy
To all who believe.

53. Do they just wait
For the final fulfilment
Of the event ? On the day
The event is finally fulfilled, ¹⁰³⁰
Those who disregarded it
Before will say : " The apostles
Of our Lord did indeed
Bring true (tidings). Have we
No intercessors now to intercede
On our behalf ? Or could we

رَزَقَكُمْ اللَّهُ ۖ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَهُمَا
عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

٥١- الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَهْوًا
وَلَعِبًا وَغَرَّتْهُمْ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا
فَالْيَوْمَ نَنْسَاهُمْ
كَمَا نَسُوا لِقَاءَ يَوْمِهِمْ هَذَا
وَمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ۝

٥٢- وَلَقَدْ جِئْنَاهُمْ بِكِتَابٍ
فَضَّلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ هَدًى
وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

٥٣- هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأْوِيلَهُ
يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلَهُ
يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ مِنْ قَبْلُ
قَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَهَلْ لَنَا
مِنْ شَفَعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ

1028. The Companions of the Fire will thirst for water and not get it, and for sustenance which will not be theirs, while the Companions of the Garden will have the refreshing rain of God's Mercy and the crystal waters of the springs and rivers of God's pleasure, and they will enjoy the bliss of God's Countenance, which will be their supreme nourishment and the fruit of their life of probation and seeking. These things will not be transferable. Cf. also xxxvii. 41-47, 62-67.

1029. " Forgetfulness " may be involuntary, from a defect of memory, or figuratively, a deliberate turning away from, or ignoring of, something we do not want, as when we say in an argument, " you conveniently forget that so-and-so is so-and-so." Here the latter kind is meant. If men deliberately ignored the Hereafter in spite of warnings, can they expect to be received by God, Whom they themselves rejected ?

1030. If those without Faith want to wait and see what happens in the Hereafter, they will indeed learn the truth, but it will be too late for them to profit by it then. All the false ideals and false gods which they put their trust upon will leave them in the lurch. If they thought that the goodness or greatness of others would help them, they will be undeceived on the day when their personal responsibility will be enforced. There will be no salvation except on their own record. How they will then wish that they had another chance ! But their chance will be gone,

Be sent back ? Then should we
Behave differently from our
Behaviour in the past."
In fact they will have lost
Their souls, and the things
They invented will leave
Them in the lurch.

SECTION 7.

54. **Our** Guardian-Lord
Is God, Who created
The heavens and the earth ¹⁰³¹
In six Days, and is firmly
Established on the Throne ¹⁰³²
(Of authority) : He draweth
The night as a veil
O'er the day, each seeking
The other in rapid succession :
He created the sun,
The moon, and the stars,
(All) governed by laws
Under His Command.
Is it not His to create
And to govern ? Blessed
Be God, the Cherisher
And Sustainer of the Worlds !

55. Call on your Lord
With humility and in private : ¹⁰³³

ثُمَّ فَنَعْمَلْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ
قَدْ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ
مِمَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ۝

۞-إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ
ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ
يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا
وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ
مُسْتَغَرَّتْ بِأَمْرِهِ
أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ
تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

۞-ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً

1031. A sublime verse, comparable to the Throne Verse, ii. 255. The Creation in *six Days* is of course metaphorical. In xlv. 14, the "Days of God" refer not so much to time as to the growth in us of a spiritual sense, a sense of sin and a sense of God's Mercy. In xxii. 47, we are told that a Day in the sight of God is *like* a thousand years of our reckoning, and in lxx. 4, the comparison is with 50,000 of our years. In the history of our material earth, we may reckon six great epochs of evolution. The significance of the figure *six* will be discussed in connection with xli. 9-12, where the matter is referred to in more detail.

1032. Throne (*arsh*) is of course metaphorical, a symbol of authority, power, and vigilance, as *Kursi* (seat, throne) was in ii. 255. *Kursi* perhaps refers to majesty, while *arsh* refers to power; and the slightly different shades of meaning throw light on the two passages. Here, we are told of the creation of the heavens and the earth in six days. But lest we should be obsessed with the Jewish idea that God *rested* on the seventh day, we are told that the Creation was but a prelude to God's work : for His authority is exercised constantly by the laws which He establishes and enforces in all parts of His Creation. The beautiful imagery of night and day seeking out each other in rapid succession is still further enforced in the Arabic by the double accusative of the verb *yugshī*, showing the *mutual* interactions of the day and the night, each covering the other in turn. The heavenly bodies show an order which is evidence of His *constant* care and government. Not only that, but it is only He Who creates, maintains, and governs, and no one else.

1033. In prayer, we must avoid any arrogance or show or loudness, or vanity of requests or words. If excess is condemned in all things, it is specially worthy of condemnation when we go humbly before our Lord,—we poor creatures before the Omnipotent Who knoweth all.

For God loveth not
Those who trespass beyond bounds.

56. Do no mischief on the earth,
After it hath been ¹⁰³⁴
Set in order, but call
On Him with fear ¹⁰³⁵
And longing (in your hearts) :
For the Mercy of God
Is (always) near
To those who do good.

57. It is He Who sendeth
The Winds like heralds
Of glad tidings, going before ¹⁰³⁶
His Mercy : when they have
Carried the heavy-laden
Clouds, We drive them
To a land that is dead,
Make rain to descend thereon,
And produce every kind
Of harvest therewith : thus
Shall We raise up the dead :
Perchance ye may remember.

58. From the land that is clean
And good, by the Will
Of its Cherisher, springs up
Produce, (rich) after its kind : ¹⁰³⁷

إِنَّكَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ٥٦

٥٦- وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا
وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ
قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ٥٧

٥٧- وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيحَ
بَشِيرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَثَلَّتْ سَحَابًا ثِقَالًا سُقْنَاهُ
لِبَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَنْزَلْنَا بِهِ الْمَاءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا
بِهِ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ
كَذَٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٥٨

٥٨- وَالْبَلَدُ الطَّيِّبُ
يَخْرُجُ نَبَاتُهُ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِ

1034. The man who prays with humility and earnestness finds the ground prepared by God for his spiritual advancement. It is all set in order, and cleared of weeds. He does not, like the wicked, upset that order, to introduce evil or mischief into it.

1035. *Fear and longing* : the fear of God is really a fear lest we should diverge from His Will, or do anything which would not be pleasing to Him : unlike ordinary fear, it therefore brings us nearer to God, and in fact nourishes our longing and desire for Him.

1036. The Parable is complete in its triple significance. (1) In the physical world the winds go like heralds of glad tidings ; they are the advance-guard, behind which is coming a great army of winds driving heavily laden clouds before it ; the wise Providence of God is their General, who directs them towards a parched land, on which the clouds deliver their gladdening showers of mercy, which convert the dead land into a living fertile, and beautiful land bearing a rich harvest. (2) In the spiritual world, the winds are the great motive forces in the mind of man, or in the world around him, that bring the clouds or instruments of God's Mercy, which descend and fertilise souls hitherto spiritually dead. (3) If we can see or experience such things in our life here below, can we doubt the resurrection of our souls after we die here?

1037. The triple parable explained in the last note is here continued. (1) In the physical world, the fertilising showers of rain yield a rich harvest on good soil, but bad soil yields little or nothing. (2) In the spiritual world, also, God's Mercies evoke no response in some souls which have chosen evil. (3) In the final reckoning, though all will be raised, not all will achieve the fulfilment of their lives.

But from the land that is
Bad, springs up nothing
But that which is niggardly :
Thus do We explain the Signs
By various (symbols) to those
Who are grateful. ¹⁰³⁸

وَالَّذِي خَبَتْ لَا يُخْرِجُ إِلَّا تَكْدًا
كَذَلِكَ نَصْرَفُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ
يَشْكُرُونَ ۝

C. 85.—Noah's warning was rejected by his
(vii. 59-99.) Generation, and they were destroyed
In the Flood. Hūd was defied
By his own people 'Ād, but they were
Swept away by a terrible blast.
Their successors, the Thamūd, were puffed up
With pride and injustice, but behold!
An earthquake buried them for their sins
After Ṣāliḥ had warned them from God.
With a rain of brimstone and fire
Were overwhelmed the Cities of the Plain
For their unexampled lusts, against which
Lot did warn them. The people of Midian
Were given to mischief and fraud : Shu'aib
Did warn them, but they heeded not,
And perished in an earthquake.
God's punishment is sure for wickedness and sin.

SECTION 8.

59. ~~We~~ We sent Noah to his people. ¹⁰³⁹
He said : " O my people !
Worship God ! ye have
No other god but Him.
I fear for you the Punishment
Of a dreadful Day !

وہ۔ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ
فَقَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهِ غَيْرُهُ إِنِّي أَخَافُ
عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝

60. The leaders of his people
Said : " Ah ! we see thee
Evidently wandering (in mind)."

٦٠۔ قَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ
إِنَّا لَنَرَاكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝

1038. *Those who are grateful* are those who joyfully receive God's Message, and respond to it by deeds of holiness and righteousness.

1039. The story of Noah in greater detail will be found in xi. 25-49. Here the scheme is to tell briefly the stories of some of the Prophets between Noah and Moses, and lead up thus to a lesson for the contemporaries of the Apostle Muḥammad himself. When Noah attacked the wickedness of his generation, he was laughed at for a madman, for he mentioned the Great Day to come in the Hereafter. God's retribution came soon afterwards—the great Flood, in which his unbelieving people were drowned, but he and those who believed in him and came into the Ark were saved.

61. He said: " O my people !
No wandering is there
In my (mind) : on the contrary
I am an apostle from
The Lord and Cherisher
Of the Worlds !

٦١- قَالَ يَقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِي ضَلَالَةٌ
وَلَكِنِّي رَسُولٌ
مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

62. " I but fulfil towards you
The duties of my Lord's mission :
Sincere is my advice to you,
And I know from God
Something that ye know not.

٦٢- أَبَلَيْتُكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّن رَّبِّي
وَأَنصَحُكُمْ لَكُمْ
وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ○

63. " Do ye wonder that
There hath come to you
A message from your Lord,
Through a man of your own
People, to warn you,—
So that ye may fear God
And haply receive His Mercy ? "

٦٣- أَوْ عَجِبْتُمْ أَن جَاءَكُمْ
ذِكْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنكُمْ لِيُنذِرَكُمْ
وَلِتَسْتَقُواْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَرْحَمُونَ ○

64. But they rejected him,
And We delivered him,
And those with him,
In the Ark :
But We overwhelmed
In the Flood those
Who rejected Our Signs.
They were indeed
A blind people !

٦٤- فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ
وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِ
وَأَغْرَقْنَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُواْ بِآيَاتِنَا
إِنَّهُمْ كَانُواْ قَوْمًا عَمِينَ ○

SECTION 9.

65. To the 'Ad people, ¹⁰⁴⁰
(We sent) Hūd, one

٦٥- وَإِلَى عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا

1040. The 'Ad people, with their prophet Hūd, are mentioned in many places. See especially xxvi. 123-140, and xli. 21-26. Their story belongs to Arabian tradition. Their eponymous ancestor 'Ad was fourth in generation from Noah, having been a son of 'Aug, the son of Aram, the son of Sām, the son of Noah. They occupied a large tract of country in Southern Arabia, extending from 'Ummān at the mouth of the Persian Gulf to Ḥadhramaut and Yemen at the southern end of the Red Sea. The people were tall in stature and were great builders. Probably the long, winding tracts of sands (aḥqāf) in their dominions (xli. 21) were irrigated with canals. They forsook the true God, and oppressed their people. A three years' famine visited them, but yet they took no warning. At length a terrible blast of wind destroyed them and their land, but a remnant known as the second 'Ad or Ṭhamūd (see below), were saved, and afterwards suffered a similar fate for their sins.

The tomb of the Prophet Hūd (*qabr Nabī Hūd*) is still traditionally shown in Ḥadhramaut, latitude 16° N. and longitude 49½° E., about 90 miles north of Mukalla. There are ruins and inscriptions in the neighbourhood. There is an annual pilgrimage to it in the month of Rajab. See " Ḥadhramaut, Some of its Mysteries Unveiled," by D. van der Meulen and H. von Wissmann. Leyden, 1932.

Of their (own) brethren :
He said : " O my people !
Worship God ! ye have
No other god but Him.
Will ye not fear (God) ? "

66. The leaders of the unbelievers
Among his people said :
" Ah ! we see thou art
An imbecile ! " and " We think
Thou art a liar ! "

67. He said : " O my people !
I am no imbecile, but
(I am) an apostle from
The Lord and Cherisher
Of the Worlds !

68. " I but fulfil towards you
The duties of my Lord's mission :
I am to you a sincere
And trustworthy adviser.

69. " Do ye wonder that
There hath come to you
A message from your Lord
Through a man of your own
People, to warn you ?
Call in remembrance
That He made you
Inheritors after the people
Of Noah, and gave you
A stature tall among the nations.
Call in remembrance
The benefits (ye have received)
From God : that so
Ye may prosper."

70. They said : " Comest thou
To us, that we may worship
God alone, and give up
The cult of our fathers ?
Bring us what thou
Threatenest us with,
If so be that thou
Tellest the truth ! "

قَالَ يَقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ
أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ○

٦٦- قَالَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ
إِنَّا لَنَرُكَ فِي سَفَاهَةٍ
وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكَذَّابِينَ ○

٦٧- قَالَ يَقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِي سَفَاهَةٌ
وَلَكِنِّي رَسُولٌ
مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

٦٨- أَتُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي
وَإِنَّا لَكُم نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ ○

٦٩- أَوْ عَجِبْتُمْ أَنْ جَاءَكُمْ
ذِكْرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ
لِيُنْذِرَكُمْ
وَأَذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ
خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ
وَزَادَكُمْ فِي الْخَلْقِ بَضْطَةً
فَاذْكُرُوا الْآيَةَ اللَّهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلَحُونَ ○

٧٠- قَالُوا إِنِ احْتِشْنَا لِنَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ
وَنَذْرَمَا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا
فَاتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ○

71: He said: "Punishment
And wrath have already ¹⁰⁴¹
Come upon you from your Lord:
Dispute ye with me
Over names which ye ¹⁰⁴²
Have devised—ye
And your fathers,—
Without authority from God?
Then wait: I am
Amongst you, also waiting."

72: We saved him and those
Who adhered to him,
By Our Mercy, and We
Cut off the roots of those
Who rejected Our Signs
And did not believe.

SECTION 10.

73. ~~Now~~ to the Thamūd people ¹⁰⁴³
(We sent) Ṣāliḥ, one

١- قَالَ قَدْ وَقَعَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ رِجْسٌ
وَعَصَبٌ أَنْجَادُونََنِي فِي أَسْمَاءٍ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا
أَنْتُمْ وَأَبَاؤُكُمْ
مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ فَإِنْ تَنْظُرُوا
إِلَيَّ مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُنْتَظِرِينَ ٥

٢- فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنَّا
وَقَطَعْنَا دَابِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بآيَاتِنَا
وَمَا كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ٥

٣- وَإِلَى ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا

1041. The past tense may be understood in three ways. (1) A terrible famine had already afflicted the 'Ad as a warning before they were overwhelmed in the final blast of hot wind (see the last note). (2) The terrible insolence and sin into which they had fallen was itself a punishment. (3) The prophetic past is used, as much as to say: "Behold! I see a dreadful calamity: it is already on you!"

1042. Why dispute over names and imaginary gods, the inventions of your minds? Come to realities. If you ask for the punishment and are waiting in insolent defiance, what can I do but also wait?—in fear and trembling for you, for I know that God's punishment is sure!

1043. The Thamūd people were the successors to the culture and civilisation of the 'Ad people, for whom see n. 1040 and vii. 65 above. They were cousins to the 'Ad, apparently a younger branch of the same race. Their story also belongs to Arabian tradition, according to which their eponymous ancestor Thamūd was a son of 'Abir (a brother of Aram), the son of Sām, the son of Noah. Their seat was in the north-west corner of Arabia (Arabia Petræa), between Medina and Syria. It included both rocky country (*ḥijr*, xv. 80), and the spacious fertile valley (Wadi) and plains country of Qura, which begins just north of the City of Medina and is traversed by the *Hijāz* Railway. When the holy Apostle in the 9th year of the *Hijra* led his expedition to Tabūk (about 400 miles north of Medina) against the Roman forces, on a reported Roman invasion from Syria, he and his men came across the archæological remains of the Thamūd. The recently excavated rock city of Petra, near Ma'an, may go back to the Thamūd, though its architecture has many features connecting it with Egyptian and Græco-Roman culture overlaying what is called by European writers Nabatæan culture. Who were the Nabatæans? They were an old Arab tribe which played a considerable part in history after they came into conflict with Antigonos I in 312 B.C. Their capital was Petra, but they extended their territory right up to the Euphrates. In 85 B.C. they were lords of Damascus under their king Ḥāritha (Aretas of Roman history). For some time they were allies of the Roman Empire and held the Red Sea littoral. The Emperor Trajan reduced them and annexed their territory in A.D. 105. The Nabatæans succeeded the Thamūd of Arabian tradition. The Thamūd are mentioned by name in an inscription of the Assyrian King Sargon, dated 715 B.C., as a people of Eastern and Central Arabia (*Encyclopædia of Islam*). See also Appendix IX to S. xxvi.

With the advance of material civilisation, the Thamūd people became godless and arrogant, and were destroyed by an earthquake. Their prophet and warner was Ṣāliḥ, and the crisis in their history is connected with the story of a wonderful she-camel: see next note.

Of their, own brethren :
 He said : " O my people !
 Worship God ; ye have
 No other god but Him.
 Now hath come unto you
 A clear (Sign) from your Lord !
 This she-camel of God
 Is a Sign unto you :
 So leave her to graze
 In God's earth, and let her
 Come to no harm,
 Or ye shall be seized
 With a grievous punishment. ¹⁰⁴⁴

74. "And remember how He
 Made you inheritors
 After the 'Ad people
 And gave you habitations
 In the land: ye build
 For yourselves palaces and castles
 In (open) plains, and carve out
 Homes in the mountains ;
 So bring to remembrance
 The benefits (ye have received)
 From God, and refrain
 From evil and mischief
 On the earth."

75. The leaders of the arrogant
 Party among his people said

قَالَ يَقُومِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
 مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ
 قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ
 مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
 هَذِهِ نَاقَةُ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ
 فَذُرُوهَا تَأْكُلْ فِي أََرْضِ اللَّهِ
 وَلَا تَمْسُوهَا سَوْءٌ
 فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابُ الْيَمِّ ۝

۴۷-۴۸. وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ
 مِنْ بَعْدِ عَادٍ
 وَبَوَّأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
 تَنْجِدُونَ مِنْ سُهُولِهَا قُصُورًا
 وَتَنْحِتُونَ الْجِبَالَ بُيُوتًا
 فَادْكُرُوا الْآرَاءَ اللَّهَ
 وَلَا تَعْتَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ۝

هـ- قَالَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا

1044. The story of this wonderful she-camel, that was a Sign to the Thamūd, is variously told in tradition. We need not follow the various versions in the traditional story. What we are told in the Qur-ān is : that (1) she was a Sign or Symbol, which the prophet Ṣālih used for a warning to the naughty oppressors of the poor ; (2) there was scarcity of water, and the arrogant or privileged classes tried to prevent the access of the poor or their cattle to the springs, while Ṣālih intervened on their behalf (xxvi. 155, liv. 28) ; (3) like water, pasture was considered a free gift of nature, in this spacious earth of God (vii. 73) but the arrogant ones tried to monopolise the pasture also ; (4) this particular she-camel was made a test case (liv. 27) to see if the arrogant ones would come to reason ; (5) the arrogant ones, instead of yielding to the reasonable rights of the people, ham-strung the poor she-camel and slew her, probably secretly (xci. 14, liv. 29) ; the cup of their iniquities was full, and the Thamūd people were destroyed by a dreadful earthquake, which threw them prone on the ground and buried them with their houses and their fine buildings.

To those who were reckoned
Powerless—those among them ¹⁰⁴⁵
Who believed : “ Know ye
Indeed that Ṣāliḥ is
An apostle from his Lord ? ”
They said : “ We do indeed
Believe in the revelation ¹⁰⁴⁶
Which hath been sent
Through him.”

76. The arrogant party said :
“ For our part, we reject
What ye believe in.”

77. Then they ham-strung
The she-camel, and insolently
Defied the order of their Lord,
Saying : “ O Ṣāliḥ ! bring about
Thy threats, if thou art
An apostle (of God) ! ”

78. So the earthquake took them ¹⁰⁴⁷
Unawares, and they lay
Prostrate in their homes
In the morning !

مِنْ قُوَّةِهِ
لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعُّوْا
لِئِنْ اٰمَنَ مِنْهُمْ
اَتَعْلَمُوْنَ اَنْ صٰلِحًا مُّرْسَلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِ
قَالُوْا اِنَّا بِمَا اُرْسِلَ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝

٧٦- قَالِ الَّذِيْنَ اسْتَكْبَرُوْا
اِنَّا بِاَلَدِيْكُمْ اٰمِنَةٌ بِهٖ كَفِرُوْنَ ۝

٧٧- فَعَقَرُوْا التَّائِمَةَ وَوَعَدُوْا عَنْ اٰمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ
وَقَالُوْا يٰصٰلِحُ اِنْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا
اِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ۝

٧٨- فَاَخَذَ تٰهَمُ الرَّجْفَةُ
فَاَصْبَحُوْا فِيْ دَارِهِمْ جٰثِمِيْنَ ۝

1045. As usually happens in such cases, the Believers were the lowly and the humble, and the oppressors were the arrogant, who in selfishly keeping back nature's gifts (which are God's gifts) from the people, were deaf to the dictates of justice and kindness. Ṣāliḥ took the side of the unprivileged, and was therefore himself attacked.

1046. Notice the relation between the question and the answer. The godless chiefs wanted to discredit Ṣāliḥ, and put a personal question, as much as to say, " Is he not a liar ? " The Believers took back the issue to the higher plane, as much as to say, " We know he is a man of God, but look at the justice for which he is making a stand : to resist it is to resist God." The answer of the godless was to reject God in words, and in action to commit a further act of cruelty and injustice in ham-stringing and killing the she-camel, at the same time hurling defiance at Ṣāliḥ and his God.

1047. The retribution was not long delayed. A terrible earthquake came and buried the people and destroyed their boasted civilisation. The calamity must have been fairly extensive in area and intense in the terror it inspired, for it is described (liv. 31) as a " single mighty blast " (*ṣaiḥtan waḥīdatan*), the sort of terror-inspiring noise which accompanies all big earthquakes.

79. So Ṣāliḥ left them, ¹⁰⁴⁸
Saying : " O my people !
I did indeed convey to you
The message for which
I was sent by my Lord :
I gave you good counsel,
But ye love not good counsellors ! "

فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يٰ قَوْمِ
لَقَدْ اَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَةَ رَبِّي
وَتَصَحَّحْتُ لَكُمْ
وَلَكِنْ لَا تُحِبُّونَ التَّصْحِيحَ ٥

80. We also (sent) Lūt : ¹⁰⁴⁹
He said to his people :
" Do ye commit lewdness
Such as no people
In creation (ever) committed
Before you ?

هٖ وَلُوْطًا اِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهٖ
اَنَا اَتُوبُنَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ
اَحَدٍ مِّنَ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ٥

81. " For ye practise your lusts
On men in preference
To women : ye are indeed
A people transgressing
Beyond bounds."

اِنَّكُمْ لَتَآتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّنْ
دُونِ النِّسَاءِ
بَلْ اَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ٥

82. And his people gave
No answer but this :
They said, " Drive them out
Of your city : these are

وَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهٖ اِلَّا
اَنْ قَالُوْا اَخْرِجُوْهُمْ مِّنْ دَرِيْثِكُمْ

1048. Ṣāliḥ was saved by God's mercy as a just and righteous man. His speech here may be either a parting warning, or it may be a soliloquy lamenting the destruction of his people for their sin and folly.

1049. Lūt is the Lot of the English Bible. His story is biblical, but freed from some shameful features which are a blot on the biblical narrative, e.g., see Gen. xix. 30-36). He was a nephew of Abraham, and was sent as an apostle and warner of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, cities utterly destroyed for their unspeakable sins. They cannot be exactly located, but it may be supposed that they were somewhere in the plain east of the Dead Sea. The story of their destruction is told in the 19th chapter of Genesis. Two angels in the shape of handsome young men came to Lot in the evening and became his guests by night. The inhabitants of Sodom in their lust for unnatural crime invaded Lot's house but were repulsed. In the morning, the angels warned Lot to escape with his family. " Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord, out of heaven ; And He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." (Gen. xix. 24-26.)

Note that Lot's people are the people to whom he is sent on a mission. He was not one of their own brethren, as was Ṣāliḥ or Shu'aib. But he looked upon his people as his brethren (l. 13), as a man of God always does.

Indeed men who want
To be clean and pure ! " 1050

83. But We saved him
And his family, except
His wife : she was
Of those who lagged behind 1051

84. And We rained down on them
A shower (of brimstone) : 1052
Then see what was the end
Of those who indulged
In sin and crime !

SECTION 11.

85. ~~And~~ To the Madyan people 1053

إِنَّهُمْ أَنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ○

٨٣- فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ ۖ

كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ○

٨٣- وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا ۖ

فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۚ ○

٨٥- وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ

1050. An instance of the withering sarcasm that hardened sinners use against the righteous. They wound with words, and follow up the insult with deeds of injustice, thinking that they would bring the righteous into disgrace. But God looks after His own, and in the end, the wicked themselves are overthrown when the cup of their iniquity is full.

1051. In the biblical narrative she looks back, a physical act (see n. 1049) : here she is a type of those who lag behind, i.e. whose mental and moral attitude, in spite of their association with the righteous, is to hark back to the glitter of wickedness and sin. The righteous should have one sole objective, the Way of God. They should not look behind, nor yet to the right or the left.

1052. The shower is expressly stated in Q. xi. 82 to have been of stones. In xv. 73-74, we are told that there was a terrible blast or noise (*gahat*) in addition to the shower of stones. Taking these passages into consideration along with Gen. xix. 24. (see n. 1049 above), I think it is legitimate to translate : " a shower of brimstone."

1053. " Madyan " may be identified with " Midian," Midian and the Midianites are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, though the particular incident here mentioned belongs to Arab rather than to Jewish tradition. The Midianites were of Arab race, though, as neighbours of the Canaanites, they probably intermixed with them. They were a wandering tribe : it was Midianite merchants to whom Joseph was sold into slavery, and who took him to Egypt. Their principal territory in the time of Moses was in the north-east of the Sinai Peninsula, and east of the Amalekites. Under Moses the Israelites waged a war of extermination against them : they slew the kings of Midian, slaughtered all the males, burnt their cities and castles, and captured their cattle (Num. xxxi. 7-11). This sounds like total extermination. Yet a few generations afterwards, they were so powerful that the Israelites for their sins were delivered into the captivity of the Midianites for seven years : both the Midianites and their camels were without number : and the Israelites hid from them in " dens...caves, and strongholds " (Judges vii. 1-6). Gideon destroyed them again. (Judges vii. 1-25), say about two centuries after Moses. As the decisive battle was near the hill of Moreh, not far south of Mount Tabor, we may localise the Midianites on this occasion in the northern parts of the Jordan valley, at least 200 miles north of the Sinai Peninsula.

This and the previous destruction under Moses were local, and mention no town of Midian. In later times there was a town of Madyan on the east side of the Gulf of 'Aqaba. It is mentioned in Josephus, Eusebius, and Ptolemy : (*Encyclopædia of Islam*). Then it disappears from geography. In Muslim times it was a revived town with quite a different kind of population, but it never flourished. The Midianites disappeared from history.

We sent Shu'aib,¹⁰⁵⁴ one
Of their own brethren : he said :
" O my people ! worship God ;
Ye have no other god
But Him. Now hath come
Unto you a clear (Sign)
From your Lord ! Give just
Measure and weight, nor withhold
From the people the things
That are their due ; and do
No mischief on the earth
After it has been set
In order : that will be best
For you, if ye have Faith.

- 86 " And squat not on every road,
Breathing threats, hindering
From the path of God
Those who believe in Him,
And seeking in it
Something crooked ;
But remember how ye were
Little, and He gave you increase.
And hold in your mind's eye
What was the end

أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا
قَالَ لِيَقُومُوا لِعِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ
مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ
قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
فَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ
وَلَا تَبْخُسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَقْسِدُوا
فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا
ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ٥

٨٠- وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا بِكُلِّ صِرَاطٍ تُوعِدُونَ
وَتَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
مَنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَتَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا
وَإِذْ كُروا إِذْ كُنْتُمْ قَلِيلًا فَكَثَرَكُمْ
وَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ

1054. Shu'aib belongs to Arab rather than to Jewish tradition, to which he is unknown. His identification with Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, has no warrant, and I reject it. There is no similarity either in names or incidents and there are chronological difficulties (see n. 1064 below). If, as the Commentators tell us, Shu'aib was in the fourth generation from Abraham, being a great-grandson of Madyan (a son of Abraham), he would be only about a century from the time of Abraham, whereas the Hebrew Bible would give us a period of four to six centuries between Abraham and Moses. The mere fact that Jethro was a Midianite and that another name, Hobab, is mentioned for a father-in-law of Moses in Num. x. 29, is slender ground for identification. As the Midianites were mainly a nomad tribe, we need not be surprised that their destruction in one or two settlements did not affect their life in wandering sections of the tribe in other geographical regions. Shu'aib's mission was apparently in one of the settled towns of the Midianites, which was completely destroyed by an earthquake (vii. 91). If this happened in the century after Abraham, there is no difficulty in supposing that they were again a numerous tribe three or five centuries later, in the time of Moses (see last note). As they were a mixed wandering tribe, both their resilience and their eventual absorption can be easily understood. But the destruction of the settlement or settlements (if the Wood or Aika was a separate settlement, see n. 2000 to xv. 78) to which Shu'aib was sent to preach was complete, and no traces of it now remain.

The name of the highest mountain of Yemen, Nabi Shu'aib (11,000 ft.) has probably no connection with the geographical territory of the nomad Midianites, unless we suppose that their wanderings extended so far south from the territories mentioned in the last note.

Of those who did mischief.¹⁰⁵⁵

87. "And if there is a party
Among you who believes
In the Message with which
I have been sent, and a party
Which does not believe,¹⁰⁵⁶
Hold yourselves in patience
Until God doth decide
8 Between us : for He
30 Is the best to decide."¹⁰⁵⁷

الْمُفْسِدِينَ ○

٨٧- وَإِنْ كَانَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْكُمْ آمَنُوا
بِالَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ
وَطَائِفَةٌ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا
فَأَصْبِرُوا حَتَّى يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا
وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ ○

1055. The Midianites were in the path of a commercial highway of Asia, viz., that between two such opulent and highly organised nations as Egypt and the Mesopotamian group comprising Assyria and Babylonia. Their besetting sins are thus characterised here: (1) giving short measure or weight, whereas the strictest commercial probity is necessary for success, (2) a more general form of such fraud, depriving people of rightful dues, (3) producing mischief and disorder, where peace and order has been established (again in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense), (4) not content with upsetting settled life, taking to highway robbery, literally as well as (5) metaphorically, in two ways, viz., cutting off people from access to the worship of God, and abusing religion and piety for crooked purposes, i.e., exploiting religion itself for their crooked ends as when a man builds houses of prayer out of unlawful gains or ostentatiously gives charity out of moneys which he has obtained by force or fraud, etc. After setting out this catalogue of besetting sins Shu'aib makes two appeals to the past: (1) You began as an insignificant tribe, and by God's favour you increased and multiplied in numbers and resources; do you not then owe a duty to God to fulfil His Law? (2) What was the result in the case of those who fell into sin? Will you not take warning by their example?

So Shu'aib began his argument with faith in God as the source of all virtue, and ended it with destruction as the result of all sin. In the next verse he pleads with them to end their controversies and come to God.

1056. Madyan is torn by internal conflict. Shu'aib comes as a peace-maker, not in virtue of his own wisdom, but by an appeal to the truth, righteousness and justice of God. As we see later, the real motives of his opponents were selfishness, arrogance, violence, lawlessness, and injustice. But he appeals to their better nature, and is prepared to argue on the basis that the party which wants to suppress those who believe in God's Message and in righteousness, has some sincere mental difficulty in accepting Shu'aib's mission. "If," he says to them, "that is the case, do you think it justifies your intolerance, your violence, or your persecution? On the contrary, events will prove by themselves who is right and who is wrong." To the small band who believe in his mission and follow his teaching, he would preach patience and perseverance. His argument to them would be: "You have faith: surely your faith is strong enough to sustain you in the hope that God's truth will triumph in the end; there is no cause for despair or dejection."

How exactly these past experiences fit the times of our holy guide Muḥammad! And it is for that analogy and that lesson that the stories of Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Lūṭ, and Shu'aib are related to us,—all different, and yet all pointing to the great lessons in Muḥammad's life.

1057. See the argument in the last note. God's decision may come partly in this very life either for the same generation or for succeeding generations, by the logic of external events. But in any case it is bound to come spiritually on a higher plane eventually, when the righteous will be comforted and the sinners will be convinced of sin from their own inner conviction.

88. The leaders, the arrogant
Party among his people, said : ¹⁰⁵⁸
"O Shu'aib ! we shall
Certainly drive thee out
Of our city—(thee) and those
Who believe with thee ;
Or else ye (thou and they)
Shall have to return
To our ways and religion."
He said : "What ! even
Though we do detest (them) ?

٨٨- قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا
مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَشْعِيبُ
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَكَ
مِنْ قَرْيَتِنَا
أَوْ لَتَعُودَنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا
قَالَ أَوَلَوْ كُنَّا كَارِهِينَ ۝

89. "We should indeed invent ¹⁰⁵⁹
A lie against God,
If we returned to your ways
After God hath rescued
Us therefrom ; nor could we
By any manner of means
Return thereto unless it be
As in the Will and Plan of God, ¹⁰⁶⁰
Our Lord. Our Lord
Can reach out to the utmost
Recesses of things by His
knowledge.
In God is our trust.
Our Lord ! Decide Thou ¹⁰⁶¹
Between us and our people

٨٩- قَدْ افْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا
إِنْ عُدْنَا فِي مِلَّتِكُمْ
بَعْدَ إِذْ نَجَّيْنَا اللَّهُ مِنْهَا
وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَعُودَ فِيهَا
إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا
وَيَسِّرَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَلَيْنَا
عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا
رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا

1058. The gentle, all-persuasive arguments of Shu'aib fell on hard hearts. Their only reply was : "Turn him out!—him and his people." When courtesy and a plea for toleration are pitted against bigotry, what room is there for logic? But bigotry and unrighteousness have their own crooked ways of pretending to be tolerant. "O yes!" they said, "we are very tolerant and long-suffering! But we are for our country and religion. Come back to the ways of our fathers, and we shall graciously forgive you!" "Ways of their fathers!"—they meant injustice and oppression, high-handedness to the poor and the weak, fraud under cover of religion, and so on! Perhaps the righteous were the poor and the weak. Were they likely to love such ways? Perhaps there was implied a bribe as well as a threat. "If you come back and wink at our iniquities, you shall have scraps of prosperity thrown at you. If not, out you go in disgrace!"

1059. The answer of the righteous is threefold. (1) "Coming back is all very well. But do you mean that we should practise the vices we detest?" (2) "You want us to lie against our conscience and our God, after we have seen the evil of your ways." (3) "Neither bribes nor threats, nor specious appeals to patriotism or ancestral religion can move us; the matter rests with God, Whose will and pleasure we obey, and on Whom alone we rely. His knowledge will search out all your specious pretences."

1060. This, of course, does not mean that any one can ever return to evil ways with God's consent. Shu'aib has already emphatically repudiated the idea of returning "to your ways after God hath rescued us therefrom." But even if their ways had been good, the human will, he goes on to say, has no data to rely upon, and he and his followers would only be guided by God's Will and Plan.

1061. Having answered the insincere quibblers among the godless, the righteous turn to God in earnest prayer. The endless controversies in this world about abstract or speculative things never end even where both sides are sincere in their beliefs. The decision must be taken to God, Who sits on the throne of Truth, and Whose decisions will, therefore, be free from the errors and imperfections of all human judgment. The sincere have nothing to fear in the appeal to Him, as their motives are pure.

In truth, for Thou
Art the best to decide."

90. The leaders, the Unbelievers
Among his people, said :
" If ye follow Shu'aib,
Be sure then ye are ruined ! " 1062

91. But the earthquake took them
Unawares, and they lay
* Prostrate in their homes
Before the morning ! 1063

92. The men who rejected
Shu'aib became as if
They had never been
In the homes where they
Had flourished: the men
Who rejected Shu'aib—
It was they who were ruined !

- * 93. So Shu'aib left them,
Saying : " O my people !
I did indeed convey to you
The Messages for which
I was sent by my Lord :
I gave you good counsel,
But how shall I lament

بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ ○

٩٠- وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ
لَئِنْ أَتَيْتُمْ شُعَيْبًا إِتَّكُمُ إِذَا الْخُسِرُونَ ○

٩١- فَأَخَذَ نَهْمُ الرَّجَفَةِ
فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَثِيئِينَ ○

٩٢- الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْبًا
كَانُوا لَمْ يَعْنُوا فِيهَا
الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْبًا
كَانُوا هُمُ الْخُسِرِينَ ○

٩٣- فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ
وَقَالَ يُقَوْمُ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ
رِسَالَتِي رُبِّي وَتَوَلَّى وَصَلَّى لَكُمْ
فَكَيْفَ أُلَی

1062. The answer of the Unbelievers is characteristic. As all their bribes and subtleties have failed, they resort to threats, which are worse than the argument of the stick. " All right," they say, "there is nothing but ruin before you !" That means that the Believers will be persecuted, held up to obloquy, ostracised, and prevented from access to all means of honourable livelihood; their families and dependants will be insulted, reviled, and tortured, if they could but be got into the enemy's power; their homes destroyed, and their names held up to ridicule and contempt even when they are gone. But, as verse 92 says, their wicked designs recoiled on themselves: it was the wicked who were ruined and blotted out.

1063. The fate of the Madyan people is described in the same terms as that of the *Thamūd* in verse 78 above. An earthquake seized them by night, and they were buried in their own homes, no longer to vex God's earth. But a supplementary detail is mentioned in xxvi. 189, "the punishment of a day of overshadowing gloom," which may be understood to mean a shower of ashes and cinders accompanying a volcanic eruption. Thus a day of terror drove them into their homes, and the earthquake finished them. The lament of Shu'aib in verse 93 is almost the same as that of Šāliḥ in verse 79, with two differences: (1) Shu'aib's messages attacked the many sins of his people (see n. 1055) and are, therefore, expressed in the plural, while Šāliḥ's fight was chiefly against selfish arrogance, and his message is expressed in the singular; (2) the *Thamūd* were the more cultured people of the two, and perished in their own pride; as Šāliḥ said, "ye love not good counsellors"; the Midianites were a rougher people, and their minds were less receptive of argument or faith; as Shu'aib said, they were a people who "refused to believe.

Over a people who refuse
To believe!" 1064

SECTION 12.

94. Whenever We sent a prophet
To a town, We took up
Its people in suffering
And adversity, in order
That they might learn humility. 1065

95. Then We changed their suffering
Into prosperity, until they grew 1066
And multiplied, and began
To say: "Our fathers (too)
Were touched by suffering
And affluence"....Behold!
We called them to account
Of a sudden, while they
Realised not (their peril).

96. If the people of the towns
Had but believed and feared
God, We should indeed
Have opened out to them

عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ ۝

۹۴- وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ
إِلَّا أَخَذْنَا أَهْلَهَا بِالْبَأْسَاءِ
وَالضَّرَاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضُرَّعُونَ ۝

۹۵- ثُمَّ بَدَّلْنَا مَكَانَ السَّيِّئَةِ الْحَسَنَةَ
حَتَّىٰ عَفَوْا
وَقَالُوا قَدْ مَسَّ آبَاءَنَا الضَّرَّاءُ
وَالسَّرَّاءُ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً
وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ۝

۹۶- وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا
لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم

1064. Can we get any idea of the chronological place of the destruction of the Midianites? In n. 1053 (vii. 85) we have discussed the geographical aspects. The following considerations will help us in getting some idea of their period. (1) The stories of Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Lūṭ, and Shu'aib seem to be in chronological order. Therefore Shu'aib came after Abraham, whose nephew Lūṭ was. (2) If Shu'aib was in the fourth generation from Abraham, (see n. 1590 to xi. 89), it would be impossible for him to have been a contemporary of Moses, who came many centuries later. This difficulty is recognised by Ibn Kathīr and other classical commentators. (3) The identification of Shu'aib with Jethro the father-in-law of Moses is without warrant; see n. 1054 (vii. 85). (4) Shu'aib must have been before Moses; see vii. 103. (5) The Midianites who were destroyed by Moses and by Gideon after him (n. 1053) were local remnants, as we may speak of the Jews at the present day; but their existence as a nation in their original home-lands seems to have ended before Moses: "they became as if they had never been in the homes where they had flourished" (vii. 92). (6) Josephus, Eusebius, and Ptolemy mention a town of Madyan, but it was not of any importance (n. 1053). (7) After the first centuries of the Christian era Madyan as a town appears as an unimportant place resting on its past.

1065. Man was originally created pure. The need of a prophet arises when there is some corruption and iniquity, which he is sent to combat. His coming means much trial and suffering, especially to those who join him in his protest against wrong. Even so peaceful a prophet as Jesus said: "I came not to send peace but a sword" (Matt. x. 34). But it is all in God's Plan, for we must learn humility if we would be worthy of Him.

1066. God gives enough rope to the sinful. They grow and multiply, and become scornful. Neither suffering nor affluence teaches them the lessons which they are meant to learn, viz., patience and humility, gratitude and kindness to others. They take adversity and prosperity alike as a matter of chance. "O yes!" they say, "such things have happened in all ages! Our fathers had such experiences before us, and our sons will have them after us. Thus goes on the world for all time!" But does it? What about the Plan of the Architect? They are found napping when Nemesis overtakes them in the midst of their impious tomfoolery!

(All kinds of) blessings
From heaven and earth ;
But they rejected (the truth),
And We brought them
To book for their misdeeds.

97. Did the people of the towns
Feel secure against the coming ¹⁰⁶⁷
Of Our wrath by night
While they were asleep ?

98. Or else did they feel
Secure against its coming
In broad daylight while they
Played about (care-free) ?

99. Did they then feel secure
Against the Plan of God ?—
But no one can feel
Secure from the Plan
Of God, except those
(Doomed) to ruin ! ¹⁰⁶⁸

بَرَكَاتٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَلَكِنْ كَذَّبُوا

فَأَخَذْنَا لَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ○

٩٧- أَفَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَى أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ
بِأَسْنَا بَيَاتًا وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ○

٩٨- أَوْ أَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَى أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ
بِأَسْنَا ضُحًى وَهُمْ يُلْعَبُونَ ○

٩٩- أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ
فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ
إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ○

C. 86.—While the story of the prophets who preached

- (vii. 100-157.) In vain to their people prefigures
The struggles in the early careers
Of all apostles, the story of Moses,—
His struggles, with an alien and arrogant
People, his final deliverance
Of his people from foreign domination,
And his leading them within sight
Of the Promised Land, in spite
Of the forces that resisted,—prefigures
The early struggles and eventual triumph
Of Muhammad the Holy Apostle of God.

1067. This and the two following verses should be read together. They furnish a commentary on the story of the five prophets that has already been related. God's wrath may come by night or by day, whether people are arrogantly defying God's laws or are sunk in lethargy or vain dreams of unreality. Who can escape God's Plan, and who can feel themselves outside it except those who are seeking their own ruin ?

1068. This closes that chapter of the narrative which deals with apostles who were rejected by their own people, but who stood firm on God's Message and were able to rescue a remnant who believed. In each case there were special circumstances and special besetting sins, which have been explained in the notes. The nations which as a body could not be won over to God's Law perished. So far we have been dealing with the corruptions and iniquities within each nation. In the story of Moses we have first a struggle against the bondage of Egypt, one of the foremost powers then in the world, the rescue of the Israelites and their wanderings, and their proving themselves unworthy and being left to wander in a new sense when they rejected the new Prophet (Muhammad) who came to renew God's Message.

SECTION 13.

100. **¶** To those who inherit
The earth in succession
To its (previous) possessors,
Is it not a guiding (lesson)
That, if We so willed,
We could punish them (too)
For their sins, and seal up
Their hearts so that they
Could not hear? ¹⁰⁶⁹

١٠٠- أَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لِلَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْأَرْضَ
مِنْ بَعْدِ أَهْلِهَا
أَنْ لَوْ شَاءَ أَصْبَنَهُم بِذُنُوبِهِمْ
وَنُطْبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ
فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ○

101. Such were the towns
Whose story We (thus)
Relate unto thee :
There came indeed to them
Their apostles with clear (Signs) :
But they would not believe
What they had rejected before.¹⁰⁷⁰
Thus doth God seal up
The hearts of those
Who reject Faith.

١٠١- تِلْكَ الْقُرَى
نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِهَا
وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
فَمَا كَانُوا إِلَّا يُؤْمِنُوا بِمَا كَذَّبُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ
كَذَلِكَ يُطْبِعُ اللَّهُ
عَلَى قُلُوبِ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

102. Most of them We found not
Men (true) to their covenant :
But most of them We found
Rebellious and disobedient.

١٠٢- وَمَا وَجَدْنَا إِلَّا أَكْثَرَهُمْ مِنْ عَهْدٍ
وَرَانَ وَجَدْنَا أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفِيسِقِينَ ○

103. **¶** When after them We sent
Moses with Our Signs
To Pharaoh and his chiefs,
But they wrongfully rejected
them :
So see what was the end
Of those who made mischief.

١٠٣- ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مُوسَى
إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ
فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا
فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ○

1069. The stories which have been related should give a warning to present and future generations which have inherited the land, the power, or the experience of the past. They should know that if they fall into the same sins they will meet with the same fate: when through their contumacy their hearts are hardened, they do not listen to the advice that falls on their ears.

1070. Those who have heard the Message and rejected it find it more difficult afterwards to retrace their steps. Evil has blocked the channels of God's grace to them. It begins with their breaking their Covenant with God; with each step afterwards they fall deeper and deeper into the mire,

104. Moses ¹⁰⁷¹ said : "O Pharaoh ! ¹⁰⁷²
I am an apostle from
The Lord of the Worlds,—

١٠٤- وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يُفْرَعُونَ
إِنِّي رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

105. One for whom it is right
To say nothing but truth
About God. Now have I
Come unto you (people), from ¹⁰⁷³
Your Lord, with a clear (Sign):
So let the Children of Israel
Depart along with me."

١٠٥- حَقِيقٌ عَلَىٰ أَن لَا أَقُولُ
عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقُّ
قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِبَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
فَأَرْسِلْ مَعِيَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ۝

106. (Pharaoh) said : " If indeed
Thou hast come with a Sign,

١٠٦- قَالَ إِن كُنتَ جِئْتَ بِآيَةٍ

1071. The story of Moses is told in many places in the Holy-Qur-ān, with a special lesson in each context. In ii. 49-71, the story is an appeal to the Jews from their own scripture and traditions, to show their true place in the religious history of mankind, and how they forfeited it. Here we have an instructive parallelism in that story to the story of Muḥammad's mission,—how both these men of God had to fight against (1) a foreign foe, arrogant, unjust, faithless, and superstitious, and (2) against the same class of internal foe among their own people. Both of them won through.

In the case of Moses, the foreign foe was Pharaoh and his Egyptians, who boasted of their earlier and superior civilisation; in the case of the Prophet Muḥammad the foreign foes were the Jews themselves and the Christians of his day. Moses led his people nearly to the Land of Promise in spite of rebellions among his own people; Muḥammad succeeded completely in overcoming the resistance of his own people by his own virtues and firmness of character, and by the guidance of God. What was a hope when these Meccan verses were revealed became an accomplishment before the end of his life and mission on earth.

1072. "Pharaoh" (Arabic, *Fir'aun*) is a dynastic title, not the name of any particular king in Egypt. It has been traced to the ancient Hieroglyphic words, *Per-āa*, which mean "Great House." The *nūn* is an "infirm" letter added in the process of Arabisation. Who was the Pharaoh in the story of Moses? If the Inscriptions had helped us, we could have answered with some confidence, but unfortunately the Inscriptions fail us. It is probable that it was an early Pharaoh of the XVIIIth Dynasty, say Thoṭmes I, about 1540 B.C. See appendix IV, on Egyptian Chronology and Israel, printed at the end of this Sūra.

1073. Notice that Moses, in addressing Pharaoh and the Egyptians, claims his mission to be not from *his* God, or *his people's* God but from "*your* Lord," from "the Lord of the Worlds." And his mission is not to *his* people only: "I come unto *you* (Egyptian people) from *your* Lord." The spirit of our version is entirely different from the spirit of the same story as told in the Old Testament (Exod. chapters i. to xv.). In Exod. iii. 18, the mission of Moses is expressed to be as from "the Lord God of the Hebrews."

The essence of the whole Islamic story is this. Joseph's sufferings and good fortune were not merely a story in a romance. Joseph was a prophet; his sufferings and his subsequent rise to power and position in Egypt were to be a lesson (a) to his wicked brothers who sold him into slavery, (b) to his people who were stricken with famine and found a welcome in Egypt, and (c) to the Egyptians, who were arrogant over their high material civilisation, but had yet to be taught the pure faith of Abraham. Israel prospered in Egypt, and stayed there perhaps two to four centuries, (Renan allows only one century.) Times changed, and the racial bigotry of the Egyptians showed its head again, and Israel was oppressed. Moses was raised up with a threefold mission again (a) to learn all the learning of the Egyptians and preach God's Truth to them as one who had been brought up among themselves, (b) to unite and reclaim his own people, and (c) to rescue them and lead them to a new world, which was to open out their spiritual horizon and lead them to the Psalms of David and the glories of Solomon.

Show it forth,—
If thou tellest the truth." 1074

107. Then (Moses) threw his rod,
And behold ! it was
A serpent, plain (for all to see) ! 1075

108. And he drew out his hand,
And behold ! it was white
To all beholders ! 1076

SECTION 14.

109. Said the Chiefs of the people
Of Pharaoh : " This is indeed
A sorcerer well-versed.

110. " His plan is to get you out
Of your land : then
What is it ye counsel ?" 1077

فَأْتِ بِهَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِیْنَ ۝

۱۰۷- فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ

فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ۝

۱۰۸- وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ

فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضٌ لِلنَّظَرِیْنَ ۝

۱۰۹- قَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ

إِنَّ هَذَا السَّاحِرُ عَلِيمٌ ۝

۱۱۰- يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُخْرِجَكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِكُمْ

فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ ۝

1074. The ensuing dialogue shows the psychology on the two sides. Pharaoh is sitting in his Darbar, with his ministers and chiefs around him. In their arrogance they are only amused at the effrontery and apparent revolt of the Israelite leaders, and they rely upon their own superior worldly power, aided by the magic which was a part of the Egyptian religion. Confronting them stand two men, Moses with his mission from God, and his brother Aaron who was his lieutenant. They are confident, not in their own powers, but in the mission they had received. The first thing they have to do is to act on the subjective mind of the Egyptians, and by methods which by God's miracle show that Egyptian magic was nothing before the true power of God.

1075. The serpent played a large part in Egyptian mythology. The great sun-god Ra won a great victory over the serpent Apophis, typifying the victory of light over darkness. Many of their gods and goddesses took the forms of snakes to impress their foes with terror. Moses's rod as a type of a serpent at once appealed to the Egyptian mentality. The contempt which the Egyptians had entertained in their minds before was converted into terror. Here was some one who could control the reptile which their great god Ra himself had such difficulty in overcoming !

1076. But the second Sign displayed by Moses was even more puzzling to the Egyptians. Moses drew out his hand from the folds of the garments on his breast, and it was white and shining as with divine light ! This was to counter any suggestions of evil, which the serpent might have created. This was no work of evil,—of black magic, or a trick or illusion. His hand was transfigured—with a light which no Egyptian sorcerers could produce. In Islam the "white hand" of Moses has passed into a proverb, for a symbol of divine glory dazzling to the beholders.

1077. The two Signs had the desired effect on the Egyptians. They were impressed, but they judged them by their own standards. They thought to themselves, "These are ordinary sorcerers; let us search out our best sorcerers and show them that they have superior power." But like all worldly people, they began to fear for their own power and possessions. It was far from Moses's intention to drive out the Egyptians from their own land. He merely wanted to end the Egyptian oppression. But the Egyptians had a guilty conscience, and they judged other people's motives by their own. They discussed the matter in Council on quite wrong premises

111. They said : " Keep him
And his brother in suspense
(For a while) ; and send
To the cities men to collect—

١١١- قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ
وَأَرْسِلْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَاشِرِينَ ۝

112. And bring up to thee
All (our) sorcerers well-versed." 1078

١١٢- يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سِحْرٍ عَلِيمٍ ۝

113. So there came
The sorcerers to Pharaoh :
They said, "Of course
We shall have a (suitable)
Reward if we win !" 1079

١١٣- وَجَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ
قَالُوا إِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا
إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ ۝

114. He said : " Yea, (and more),—
For ye shall in that case
Be (raised to posts)
Nearest (to my person)."

١١٤- قَالَ نَعَمْ
وَأَنْتُمْ لِمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ۝

115. They said : " O Moses !
Wilt thou throw (first),
• Or shall we have
The (first) throw ?"

١١٥- قَالُوا يَمُوسَى إِمَّا أَنْ تُلْقِيَ
وَأِمَّا أَنْ نَكُونَ نَحْنُ الْمُلْقِينَ ۝

116. Said Moses : " Throw ye (first)."
So when they threw,
They bewitched the eyes
Of the people, and struck
Terror into them : for they
Showed a great (feat of) magic. 1080

١١٦- قَالَ الْقَوَا
فَلَمَّا الْقَوَا سَكَرُوا مِنْ الْكَاثِرِ
وَأَسْأَرَهُمْ هَوَاهُمْ وَجَاءُوا بِسِحْرِ عَظِيمٍ ۝

1078. The advice of the Council to Pharaoh shows a misreading of the situation. They were in a panic about what the magic of this evidently powerful sorcerer could do against them. So they advised the Pharaoh to summon their most powerful sorcerers from all over the country, and in the meantime to hold Moses and Aaron in suspense,—neither to yield to them nor definitely to oppose them. The men of God could well afford to wait. Time is always in favour of Truth.

1079. The most noted sorcerers of Pharaoh came. Their art was built up on trickery and imposture, and the first thing they could think of was to make a selfish bargain for themselves. The Pharaoh and his Council would in their present state of panic agree to anything. And so they did. Pharaoh not only promised them any rewards they desired if they foiled the strange power of these men, but he also promised them the highest dignities round his own person. And so the contest begins, with due observance of the amenities observed by combatants before they come to close grips.

1080. Moses and his brother Aaron were pitted against the most skilful magic-men of Egypt, but they were calm and confident and let the magic-men have their innings first. As is usual in this world, the magicians' trickery made a great impression on the people, but when Moses threw his rod, the illusion was broken, and the falsehood was all shown up. In the Old Testament story (Exod. vii. 10-12) it was Aaron that threw the rod, and he threw it before the magicians. Aaron's rod became a serpent. Then the magicians threw their rods, and they became serpents, but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. The story given to us is more dramatic and less literal. We are told in general terms that Moses first allowed the magic-men to play their tricks. The rod of Moses was the symbol of his authority. It must have been a simple shepherd's crook with which he used to feed his flocks. With God's grace behind him, he was able to expose all false trickery and establish the Truth.

117. We put it into Moses's mind
By inspiration : " Throw (now)
Thy rod " : and behold !
It swallows up straightway
All the falsehoods
Which they fake !

118. Thus truth was confirmed,
And all that they did
Was made of no effect.

119. So the (great ones) were vanquished
There and then, and were
Made to look small. ¹⁰⁸¹

120. But the sorcerers fell down
Prostrate in adoration.

121. Saying : " We believe
In the Lord of the Worlds,—

122. " The Lord of Moses and Aaron."

123. Said Pharaoh : " Believe ye
In Him before I give
You permission ? Surely
This is a trick which ye
Have planned in the City
To drive out its people :
But soon shall ye know
(The consequences). ¹⁰⁸²

١١٧- وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ
أَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ
فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ۝

١١٨- وَقَوَّعَ الْحَقُّ
وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

١١٩- فَغَلِبُوا هَٰذَا لَكَ
وَأَنقَلَبُوا صَٰغِرِينَ ۝

١٢٠- وَأَلْقَى السَّحَرَةُ سِجْرَهُنَّ ۝

١٢١- قَالُوا أَمَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

١٢٢- رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ ۝

١٢٣- قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ اأَمْسِكْ بِهِ
قَبْلَ أَنْ أَدْنَىٰ لَّكَ ۚ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَمَكْرٌ
مِّمَّكَرَتِكَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ
لِتُخْرِجُوا مِنْهَا أَهْلَهَا ۚ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

1081. The proud ones of the Court—Pharaoh and his chiefs—were hard-hearted, and the exposure of the imposture only made them wreak their rage on those whom they could reach. On the other hand the effect on the humbler ones—those who had been made the dupes and instruments of the imposture—was quite different. Their conscience was awakened. They fell down to the ground in adoration of the Lord of the Worlds, and confessed their faith.

1082. Pharaoh and his Court were doubly angry : first because they were made to look small when confronted by the power of God, and secondly, because their dupes and instruments were snatched away from them. These men, the sorcerers, at once recognised the Signs of God, and in their case the mission of Moses and Aaron was fulfilled. They turned back on their past life of imposture, make-believe, false worship, and oppression of the weak, and confessed the One true God. As usually happens, hardened sinners resent all the more the saving of any of their companions from sin and error. Judging other people's motives by their own, they accuse them of duplicity, and if they have the power, they take cruel revenge. Here the Pharaoh threatens the repentant sinners with the extreme punishment for treason and apostasy (cutting off of hands and feet, combined with an ignominious death on the cross, as in the case of the worst malefactors). But they remained firm, and prayed to God for patience and constancy. Probably their influence spread quietly in the commonalty. Ultimately it appeared on the Throne itself, in the person of Amenophis IV, about five or six generations afterwards. See Appendix V, on Egyptian Religion, printed at the end of this Sūra.

124. " Be sure I will cut off
Your hands and your feet
On opposite sides, and I
Will cause you all
To die on the cross."

125. They said : " For us,
We are but sent back
Unto our Lord :

126. " But thou dost wreak
Thy vengeance on us
Simply because we believed
In the Signs of our Lord
When they reached us !
Our Lord ! pour out on us
Patience and constancy, and take
Our souls unto Thee
As Muslims (who bow
To Thy Will) ! ¹⁰⁸³

SECTION 15.

127. Said the chiefs of Pharaoh's
People : " Wilt thou leave
Moses and his people,
To spread mischief in the land,
And to abandon thee
And thy gods ? " He said :
" Their male children will we
Slay ; (only) their females
Will we save alive ;
And we have over them

١٢٤-لَا قَطِيعَ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ
مِّنْ خِلَافٍ
ثُمَّ لَا صَلْبَ لَكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝

١٢٥-قَالُوا
إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ ۝

١٢٦-وَمَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّا
إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا
لَمَّا جَاءَنَا
رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا
وَتَوْفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ ۝

١٢٧-وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنَ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ
أَتَدْرِي مَوْسَىٰ وَقَوْمُهُ لِيُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَيَذَرُكَ وَالْهَتَّكَ
قَالَ سَنَقْتِلُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ
وَنَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّا فَوْقَهُمْ

1083. These Egyptians, by their patience and constancy, show that their repentance was true. Thus in their case the mission of Moses was fulfilled directly, and their number must have amounted to a considerable figure. They were martyrs to their faith, and their martyrdom affected their nation in two ways. In the first place, as they were the pick of those who practised the false superstition in Egypt, their conversion and disappearance dealt a staggering blow to the whole system. Secondly, the indirect effect of their martyrdom on the commonalty of Egypt must have been far greater than can be measured by numbers. The banner of God was planted, and the silent spiritual fight must have gone on ever since, though history, in recording outward events, is silent on the slow and gradual processes of transformation undergone by Egyptian religion. From a chaotic pantheon of animals and animal gods, the worship of the sun and the heavenly bodies, and the worship of the Pharaoh as the embodiment of power, they gradually came to realise the oneness and mercy of the true God. After many glimpses of Monotheism on Egyptian soil itself, the Gospel of Jesus reached them, and eventually Islam.

(Power) irresistible." 1084

128. Said Moses to his people :
" Pray for help from God,
And (wait) in patience and
constancy :

For the earth is God's,
To give as a heritage
To such of His servants
As He pleaseth ; and the end
Is (best) for the righteous." 1085

129. They said : " We have had
(Nothing but) trouble, both before
And after thou comest 1086
To us." He said :
" It may be that your Lord
Will destroy your enemy
And make you inheritors 1087
In the earth ; that so
He may try you
By your deeds."

SECTION 16.

130. ~~We~~ We punished the people
Of Pharaoh with years

قَاهِرُونَ ○

١٢٨- قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ

اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ

وَاصْبِرُوا إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ

يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ

وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ○

١٢٩- قَالُوا أَوَذِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا

وَمِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا

قَالَ عَلَىٰ رَأْسِكُمْ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ عَدُوُّكُمْ

وَيَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ

فَيَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ○

ع

١٣٠- وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِالسِّنِينَ

1084. Pharaoh's order against the sorcerers was drastic enough. But his Council is not satisfied, What about Moses and the Israelites? They had a seeming victory, and will now be more mischievous than ever. They appeal to Pharaoh's vanity and his superstition and sense of power. "If you leave them alone," they say, "where will be your authority? You and your gods will be defied!" Pharaoh has a ready answer. He was really inwardly cowed by the apparent power of Moses. He dared not openly act against him. But he had already, before the birth of Moses, passed a cunning order to destroy the whole people of Israel. Through the instrumentality of midwives (Exod. i. 15) all the male children were to be destroyed, and the females would then be for the Egyptians: the race of Israel would thus be at an end. This order was still in force, and would remain in force until the despised race was absorbed. But Egyptian cunning and wickedness had no power against God's Plan for those who had faith. See verse 129 below.

1085. Notice the contrast between the arrogant tone of Pharaoh and the humility and faith taught by Moses. In the end the arrogance was humbled, and humility and faith were protected and advanced.

1086. There is a slight note of querulousness in the people's answer. But Moses allays it by his own example and courage, and his vision of the future: which was amply fulfilled in time. See verse 137 below.

1087. The Israelites, despised and enslaved, were to be rescued and made rulers in Palestine. David and Solomon were great kings and played a notable part in history. But the greatness of Israel was conditional; they were to be judged by their deeds. When they fell from grace, other people were given honour and power. And so it came to be the turn of the Arab race, and so on. God gives His gifts to those who are righteous and obey His Law.

(Of drought) and shortness
Of crops ; that they might
Receive admonition.

131. But when good (times) came,
They said, " This is due
To us ; " when gripped
By calamity, they ascribed it
To evil omens connected
With Moses and those with him !
Behold ! in truth the omens
Of evil are theirs ¹⁰⁸⁸
In God's sight, but most
Of them do not understand !

132. They said (to Moses) :
" Whatever be the Signs
Thou bringest, to work
Therewith thy sorcery on us, ¹⁰⁸⁹
We shall never believe
In thee."

133. So We sent (plagues) on them :
Wholesale Death, ¹⁰⁹⁰
Locusts, Lice, Frogs,
And Blood : Signs openly ¹⁰⁹¹
Self-explained : but they
Were steeped in arrogance, —
A people given to sin.

134. Every time the Penalty
Fell on them, they said :

وَنَقِصَ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذْكُرُونَ ○

١٣١- فَاِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْحَسَنَةُ
قَالُوا النَّارُ هَذِهِ ؕ وَاِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ
يَطْبِئُرُوا يَمْؤُسَى وَمَنْ مَعَهُ
اِلَّا اِنَّمَا ظَنَرُوهُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ
وَلَكِنْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

١٣٢- وَقَالُوا مَا هُمَا نَاتِنَا بِهِ مِنْ اٰيَةٍ
لِّتَسْحَرَنَا بِهَا
فَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ○

١٣٣- فَاَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ
وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ
وَالْدَّمَارِئِ مَفْضَلَتِ
فَاَسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِيْنَ ○
١٣٤- وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّجْزُ قَالُوا

1088. Their superstition ascribed the punishment of their own wickedness to some evil omen. They thought Moses and his people brought them ill-luck. They did not look within themselves to see the root of evil, and the cause of their punishment ! So it happens in all ages. People blame the righteous for something which they do, different from other men, instead of searching out their own lapses from rectitude, which are punished by God.

1089. A type of obstinacy and resistance to God's message. As they believed in sorcery and magic, they thought anything unusual was but sorcery and magic, and hardened their hearts against Truth.

1090. *Tufan* = a widespread calamity, causing wholesale death and destruction. It may be a flood, or a typhoon, or an epidemic, among men or cattle. Perhaps the last is meant, if we may interpret by the Old Testament story (Exod. ix. 3, 9, 15 ; xii. 29).

1091. In xvii. 101, the reference is to nine Clear Signs. These are : (1) the Rod (vii. 107), (2) the Radiant Hand (vii. 108), (3) the years of drought or shortage of water (vii. 130), (4) short crops (vii. 130), and the five mentioned in this verse, *viz.*, (5) epidemics among men and beasts, (6) locusts, (7) lice, (8) frogs, and (9) the water turning to blood.

" O Moses ! on our behalf
Call on thy Lord in virtue
Of His promise to thee :
If thou wilt remove
The Penalty from us,
We shall truly believe in thee,
And we shall send away
The Children of Israel
With thee." ¹⁰⁹²

135. But every time We removed
The Penalty from them
According to a fixed term
Which they had to fulfil,—¹⁰⁹³
Behold ! they broke their word !

136. So We exacted retribution
From them : We drowned them ¹⁰⁹⁴
In the sea, because they
Rejected Our Signs, and failed
To take warning from them. ¹⁰⁹⁵

137. And We made a people,
Considered weak (and of no
account),
Inheritors of lands
In both East and West,—

يُمُوسَى اذْعَلْنَا رَبَّكَ
بِمَا عَاهَدَ عِنْدَكَ
لَئِنْ كَشَفْتَ عَنَّا الرِّجْزَ
لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ

وَلَنُرْسِلَنَّ مَعَكَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ۝

١٣٥- فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ الرِّجْزَ

إِلَى أَجَلٍ

هُم بِالْغَوَةِ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْتَكِبُونَ ۝

١٣٦- فَأَنْتَقِمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ

بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا

وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ ۝

١٣٧- وَأَوْزَعْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا

يُسْتَظْعَفُونَ مَشَارِقَ الْأَرْضِ

1092. The demand of Moses was two fold : (1) come to God and cease from oppression, and (2) let me take Israel out of Egypt. At first it was laughed at and rejected with scorn. When the Plagues came for punishment, each time the Egyptians suffered, they promised amendment and begged Moses to intercede and cause the plague to cease. But every time it ceased, they went back to their evil attitude, until the final retribution came. This is a type of the sinner's attitude for all times.

1093. The intercession of Moses was limited to prayer. Each plague or penalty had its appointed term in God's decree. That term was duly fulfilled before the plague ceased. God's law is firm : it does not vacillate like the human will. The intercession only meant two things : (1) that God's name was invoked and His presence duly brought home to the mind and heart of the sinner who promised repentance, and (2) that the sinner was given a further chance if the prayer was accepted. This again is a universal truth.

1094. When at last Pharaoh let Israel go, they selected, not the highway to Canaan, along the Mediterranean and by Gaza, because they were unarmed and would have encountered immediate opposition there, but by way of the wilderness of Sinai. They had to cross the marshy end of the Red Sea, which they did, while Pharaoh's host which came in pursuit was drowned. Cf. ii. 50.

1095. Where was the Council of Pharaoh held in which Moses addressed Pharaoh ? Egypt's primary capital in the XVIIIth Dynasty was Thebes (=No-Ammon), but that was more than 400 miles to the south of the Delta, in whose corner Israel dwelt. Memphis, on the apex of the Delta, a little south of where Cairo is now, was also over 100 miles from Israel's habitations. The interview must have been either in a Palace near Goshen, where the Israelites dwelt, or in Zoan (=Tanis), the Deltaic capital built by a former dynasty, which was of course still available for the reigning dynasty, and which was not far from the Israelite settlement.

Lands whereon We sent
Down Our blessings.
The fair promise of thy Lord
Was fulfilled for the Children
Of Israel, because they had
Patience and constancy,
And We levelled to the ground
The great Works and fine

Buildings
Which Pharaoh and his people
Erected (with such pride).¹⁰⁹⁶

138. ~~We~~ We took the Children of Israel
(With safety) across the sea.
They came upon a people
Devoted entirely to some idols¹⁰⁹⁷
They had. They said :
" O Moses ! fashion for us
A god like unto the gods
They have." He said :

وَمَغَارِبَهَا الَّتِي بَرَكْنَا فِيهَا
وَكُنْتُ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَى
عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ هـ
بِمَا صَبَرُوا
وَدَمَرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَ
قَوْمُهُ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْرِشُونَ ٢٣٨

١٣٨- وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ الْبَحْرَ
فَأَنذَرْنَا عَلَى قُومِهِمُ يَعْكَفُونَ عَلَى أَصْنَامِهِمْ
لَهُمْ قَالُوا يَمْيُوسَى اجْعَلْ لَنَا
إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمُ إِلَهَةٌ قَالَ

1096. Israel, which was despised, became a great and glorious nation under Solomon. He had goodly territory, and was doubly blest. His land and people were prosperous, and he was blessed with wisdom from God. His sway and his fame spread east and west. And thus God's promise to Israel was fulfilled. Note that Syria and Palestine had once been under the sway of Egypt. At the same time the proud and rebellious Pharaoh and his people were brought low. The splendid monuments which they had erected with so much skill and pride were mingled with the dust. Their great cities—Thebes (or No-Ammon), Memphis (or Noph, sacred to the Bull of Osiris), and the other splendid cities, became as if they had not existed, and archæologists have had to dig up their ruins from the sands. The splendid monuments—temples, palaces, tombs, statues, columns, and stately structures of all kinds—were buried in the sands. Even monuments like the Great Sphinx, which seem to defy the ages, were partly buried in the sands, and owe their rescue to the comparatively recent researches of archæologists. As late as 1743 Richard Pococke in his *Travels in Egypt* (p. 41), remarked : " Most of those pyramids are very much ruined."

The contrast between Egypt and Israel is one part of the story in the march of time. Israel also was found unworthy, and in course of time the Arabs, whom they despised as Ishmaelites, became their masters. The Jews in their Ghettos in Europe suffered much persecution. Nor are they out of the wood yet. If the Pogroms of the Slavs against them have ceased, their fate in Nazi Germany is the talk of the world. Nor had the Arabs or Turks or any nation a perpetual lease of power from God. The test is righteousness and the Muslim virtues taught in the Universal Religion of faith and right conduct.

1097. Who were these people? We are now in the Sinai Peninsula. Two conjectures are possible: (1) The Amalekites of the Sinai Peninsula were at perpetual war with the Israelites. They were probably an idolatrous nation, but we have very little knowledge of their cult. (2) From Egyptian history we know that Egypt had worked from very ancient times some copper mines in Sinai. An Egyptian settlement may have been here. Like all mining camps it contained from the beginning the dregs of the population. When the mines ceased to be worked, the settlement, or what remained of it, must have degenerated further. Cut off from civilisation, its cult must have become still narrower, without the refining influences which a progressive nation applies even to its idolatry. Perhaps Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis, lost all its allegorical meaning for them, and only gross and superstitious rites remained among them. The text speaks of " some idols they had," implying that they had merely a detached fragment of a completer religion. This was a snare in the path of the Israelites, whom many generations of slavery in Egypt had debased into ignorance and superstition.

" Surely ye are a people
Without knowledge.

139. " As to these folk,
The cult they are in
Is (but) a fragment of a ruin,¹⁰⁹⁸
And vain is the (worship)
Which they practise."

140. He said : " Shall I seek for you
A god other than the (true)
God, when it is God
Who hath endowed you
With gifts above the nations ? "

141. And remember We rescued you
From Pharaoh's people,
Who afflicted you with
The worst of penalties,
Who slew your male children
And saved alive your females :
In that was a momentous
Trial from your Lord. ¹⁰⁹⁹

SECTION 17.

142. We appointed for Moses
Thirty nights, and completed
(The period) with ten (more) :
Thus was completed the term
(Of communion) with his Lord,¹¹⁰⁰
Forty nights. And Moses
Had charged his brother Aaron
(Before he went up) :

إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ○

١٣٩-إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ مُتَّبِعُونَ

مَا هُمْ فِيهِ

وَبُطْلٌ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

١٤٠-قَالَ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ

أُبْغِيكُمْ إِلَهًا

وَهُوَ فَضَّلَكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ○

١٤١-وَأَذِ انْجَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ

يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ

يُقَتِّلُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ

وَفِي ذَلِكَ بَلَاءٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ۝

١٤٢-وَوَعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً

وَأَتْمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرِ

فَتَمَّ مِيقَاتُ رَبِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً

وَقَالَ مُوسَى لِأَخِيهِ هَارُونَ

1098. If conjecture 2 in the last note is correct, this idolatrous worship was but the fragment of a ruin from Egypt, and Moses's reproach is biting : " You, who have been rescued from the bondage of living Egypt,—do you hanker after the bondage of a dead cult debased even from that from which you have been rescued ? "

Mutabbat—broken in pieces, smashed into fragments, destroyed.

1099. This is God's reminder to Israel through the mouth of Moses. There was a double trial : (1) while the bondage lasted, the people were to learn patience and constancy in the midst of affliction ; (2) when they were rescued, they were to learn humility, justice, and righteous deeds of prosperity.

1100. There is much mystic doctrine in this section, and the parallel between Israel and Islam continues throughout. The forty nights' communion of Moses with God on the Mount may be compared with the forty days' fast of Jesus in the wilderness before he took up his Ministry (Matt. iv. 2), and with the forty years of Muṣṭafā's preparation in life before he took up his Ministry. In each case the Apostles lived alone apart from their people, before they came into the full blaze of the events of their Ministry. The forty is divided into thirty and ten, prefiguring the thirty days of the Ramadhān fast, and the ten days of the Zūl-Ḥajj pilgrimage in Islam.

"Act for me amongst my people :
Do right, and follow not
The way of those
Who do mischief." 1101

اخْلُقْنِي فِي قَوْمِي وَأَصْلِحْ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ○

143. When Moses came
To the place appointed by Us,
And his Lord addressed him,
He said : " O my Lord !
Show (Thyself) to me,
That I may look upon Thee." 1102
God said : " By no means
Canst thou see Me (direct) ;
But look upon the Mount ;
If it abide
In its place, then
Shalt thou see Me." 1103
When his Lord manifested
His glory on the Mount,
He made it as dust,
And Moses fell down
In a swoon. When he
Recovered his senses he said :
" Glory be to Thee ! To Thee
I turn in repentance, and I
Am the first to believe." 1104

١٤٣- وَلَمَّا جَاءَ مُوسَى لِمِيقَاتِنَا
وَكَلَّمَهُ رَبُّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ
أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ لَنْ تَرِنِي
وَلَكِنْ أَنْظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ
فَإِنْ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ فَسَوْفَ تَرِنِي
فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّى رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ
جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا
وَخَرَّ مُوسَى صَعِقًا
فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ
قَالَ سُبْحَنَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ
وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

1101. When for any reason the man of God is absent from his people, his duty of leadership (*khalāfat*) should be taken up by his brother,—not necessarily a blood-brother, but one of his society or brotherhood. The deputy should discharge it in all humility, remembering three things : (1) that he is only a deputy, and bound to follow the directions of his Principal, (2) that right and justice are of the essence of power, and (3) that mischief gets its best chance to raise its head in the absence of the Principal, and that the deputy should always guard against the traps laid for him in the Principal's absence.

1102. Even the best of us may be betrayed into overweening confidence or spiritual ambition not yet justified by the stage we have reached. Moses had already seen part of the glory of God in his Radiant White Hand, that shone with the glory of Divine light (vii. 108, n. 1076). But he was still in the flesh, and the mission to his people was to begin after the Covenant of Sinai. It was premature of him to ask to see God.

1103. But God—the Cherisher of all His creatures—treats even our foolish requests with mercy, compassion, and understanding. Even the reflected glory of God is too great for the grosser substance of matter. The peak on which it shone became as powder before the ineffable glory, and Moses could only live by being taken out of his bodily senses. When he recovered from his swoon, he saw the true position, and the distance between our grosser bodily senses and the true splendour of God's glory. He at once turned in penitence to God, and confessed his faith. Having been blinded by the excessive Glory, he could not see with the physical eye. But he could get a glimpse of the reality through faith, and he hastened to proclaim his faith.

1104. "First to believe." Cf. the expression "first of those who bow to God in Islam" in vi. 14 and vi. 163. "First" means here not the first in time, but most zealous in faith. It has the intensive and not the comparative meaning.

144. (God said : " O Moses !
I have chosen thee
Above (other) men, ¹¹⁰⁵
By the mission I (have
Given thee) and the words
I (have spoken to thee) :
Take then the (revelation)
Which I gave thee,
And be of those
Who give thanks." ¹¹⁰⁶

145. And We ordained laws
For him in the Tablets
In all matters, both
Commanding and explaining
All things, (and said) :
" Take and hold these
With firmness, and enjoin
Thy people to hold fast
By the best in the precepts : ¹¹⁰⁷
Soon shall I show you ¹¹⁰⁸
The homes of the wicked, — ¹¹⁰⁹
(How they lie desolate) "

146. Those who behave arrogantly
On the earth in defiance

١٣٣- قَالَ يٰمُوسٰى
اِنِّى اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ
بِرِسَالَتِىْ وَبِكَلَامِىْ
فَخُذْ مَا اتٰىكَ
وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِيْنَ ۝

١٣٥- وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِى الْاَوْحٰى
مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّوْعِظَةً
وَتَفْصِيْلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ
وَامُرْ قَوْمَكَ يٰخُذْ وَاٰحْسِنُهَا
سَآوِرِكُمْ دَارَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ۝

١٣٦- سَآوِرُكَ عَنْ اٰلِىِّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْفُرُوْنَ

1105. " Above (other) men " : i.e., among his contemporaries. He had a high mission, and he had the honour of speaking to God.

1106. God's revelation is for the benefit of His creatures, who should receive it with reverence and gratitude. While Moses was having these great spiritual experiences on the Mount, his people below were ungrateful enough to forget God and make a golden calf for worship (vii. 1-47).

1107. The Tablets of the Law contained the essential spiritual Truth, from which were derived the positive injunctions and prohibitions, explanations and interpretations, which it was the unction of the prophetic office to hold up for the people to follow. The precepts would contain, as the Shari'at does, matters absolutely prohibited, matters not prohibited but disapproved, matters about which there was no prohibition or injunction, but in which conduct was to be regulated by circumstances; matters of positive and universal duty, matters recommended for those whose zeal was sufficient to enable them to work on higher than minimum standards, and matters which were sought by persons of the highest spiritual eminence. No soul is burdened beyond its capacity; but we are asked to seek the best and highest possible for us in conduct.

1108. Notice the transition from the " We " of authority and honour and impersonal dignity, to the " I " of personal concern in specially guiding the righteous.

1109. There are two meanings, one literal and the other figurative. Literally, the homes of the wicked, both individuals and nations, lie desolate, as in the case of the ancient Egyptians, the 'Ad, and the Thamud. Figuratively, the " home " shows the inner and more intimate condition of people. If you are dazzled by the outward prosperity of the ungodly, examine their inner anguish and fear and insecurity, and you will thank God for His gracious guidance.

Of right—they will I
 Turn away from my Signs : ¹¹¹⁰
 Even if they see all the Signs,
 They will not believe in them ;
 And if they see the way
 Of right conduct, they will
 Not adopt it as the Way ;
 But if they see the way
 Of error, that is
 The Way they will adopt.
 For they have rejected ¹¹¹¹
 Our Signs, and failed
 To take warning from them.

147. Those who reject Our Signs
 And the Meeting in the Hereafter,—
 Vain are their deeds :
 Can they expect to be rewarded
 Except as they have wrought ?

SECTION 18.

148. The people of Moses made,
 In his absence, out of their
 ornaments. ¹¹¹²

فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ
 وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كَلَّ آيَةٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِهَا
 وَإِنْ يَكُونُوا سَبِيلَ الرُّشْدِ
 لَا يَتَّخِذُوا سَبِيلًا
 وَإِنْ يَكُونُوا سَبِيلَ الْحَقِّ يَتَّخِذُوا سَبِيلًا
 ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
 وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ

۱۴۷- وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَلِقَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ
 حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ
 إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

۱۴۸- وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَى
 مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مِنْ حُلِيِّهِمْ

1110. The argument may be simplified thus in paraphrase. The right is established on the earth as God created it: Nature recognises and obeys God's law as fixed for each portion of Creation. But man, because of the gift of Will, sometimes upsets this balance. The root-cause is his arrogance, as it was in the case of Ib'is. God's Signs are everywhere, but if they are rejected with scorn and blasphemy, God will withdraw His grace, for sin hardens the heart and makes it impervious to the truth. Want of faith produces a kind of blindness to spiritual facts, a kind of deafness to the warnings of a Day of Account, when the best of us will need His Mercy for our Salvation, which may be described spiritually as our "Seeing God." If we had contumaciously rejected faith, can we hope for anything but justice,—the just punishment of our signs ?

1111. *Rejected Our Signs*: again a return to the Plural of impersonal Dignity and Authority, from the singular of personal concern in granting grace and guidance to the righteous.

1112. The making of the golden calf and its worship by the Israelites during the absence of Moses on the Mount were referred to in ii. 51 and some further details are given in xx. 85-97. Notice how in each case only those points are referred to which are necessary to the argument in hand. A narrator, whose object is mere narration, tells the story in all its details, and is done with it. A consummate artist, whose object is to enforce lessons, brings out each point in its proper place. Master of all details, he does not ramble, but with supreme literary skill, just adds the touch that is necessary in each place to complete the spiritual picture. His object is not a story but a lesson. Here notice the contrast between the intense spiritual communion of Moses on the Mount and the simultaneous corruption of his people in his absence. We can understand his righteous indignation and bitter grief (vii. 150). The people had melted all their gold ornaments, and made the image of a calf like the bull of Osiris in the city of Memphis in the wicked Egypt that they had turned their backs upon.

عَجَلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُ خَوَاطِرٌ
أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمْ
وَلَا يَهْدِيهِمْ سَبِيلًا
اتَّخَذُوهُ وَكَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ ۝

١٢٩- وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ فِي آيَاتِنَا مَا وَرَأَوُا آلِهَهُمْ
قَدْ ضَلُّوا قَالَوا الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرَحِّمْنَا رَبُّنَا
وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ۝

١٥٠- وَلَمَّا رَجَعَ مُوسَى إِلَى قَوْمِهِ غَضْبَانَ
أَسْفًا قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَخْلَقْتُمُنِي مِنْ بَعْدِي
أَعْمَلْتُمْ أَمْرًا سِرًّا
وَأَنْتُمْ الْإِلَاحُ

1116. *Put down the Tablets*: we are not told that the Tablets were broken; in fact vii. 154 (below) shows that they were whole. They contained God's Message. There is a touch of disrespect (if not blasphemy) in supposing that God's Messenger broke the Tablets in his incontinent rage, as is stated in the Old Testament; "Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands, and brake them beneath the Mount." (Exod. xxxii. 19.) On this point and also on the point that Aaron (in the Old Testament story) ordered the gold to be brought, made a molten calf, fashioned it with a graving tool, and built an altar before the calf (Exod. xxxii. 2-5), our version differs from that of the Old Testament. We cannot believe that Aaron, who was appointed God to assist Moses as God's Messenger, could descend so low as to seduce the people into idolatry, whatever his human weaknesses might be.

Seized his brother by (the hair
Of) his head, and dragged him ¹¹¹⁷
To him. Aaron said:
"Son of my mother! The people
Did indeed reckon me
As naught, and went near
To slaying me! Make not
The enemies rejoice over
My misfortune, nor count thou
Me amongst the people
Of sin." ¹¹¹⁸

151. Moses prayed: "O my Lord!
Forgive me and my brother! ¹¹¹⁹
Admit us to Thy mercy!
For Thou art the Most Merciful
Of those who show mercy!"

SECTION 19.

152. ~~Those~~ Those who took the calf
(For worship) will indeed
Be overwhelmed with wrath
From their Lord, and with
Shame in his life: ¹¹²⁰
Thus do We recompense
Those who invent (falsehoods).

153. But those who do wrong
But repent thereafter and
(Truly) believe,—verily
Thy Lord is thereafter
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ بِرَأْسِ أَخِيهِ يَجُرُّهُ إِلَيْهِ
قَالَ ابْنُ أُمِّ
إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضَعُّوْنِي
وَكَادُوا يَقْتُلُونَنِي ۖ
فَلَا تَشْمِتْ بِيَ الْأَعْدَاءُ
وَلَا تَجْعَلْنِي مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ○
١٥١- قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِإِخِي
وَادْخُلْنَا فِي رَحْمَتِكَ ۖ
وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيمِينَ ○

١٥٢- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا الْبُجْلَ
سَيْنًا لَهُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنْ رَبِّهِمْ
وَذِلَّةٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
وَكَذَلِكَ يَجْزِي الْمُفْتَرِينَ ○
١٥٣- وَالَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ
ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهَا وَأَمْنُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
مِنْ بَعْدِهَا غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ○

1117. Moses was but human. Remembering the charge he had given to Aaron (vii. 142) he had a just grievance at the turn events had taken. But he did not wreak his vengeance on the Tablets of God's law by breaking them. He laid hands on his brother, and his brother at once explained.

1118. Aaron's speech is full of tenderness and regret. He addresses Moses as "son of my mother,"—an affectionate term. He explains how the turbulent people nearly killed him for resisting them. And he states in the clearest terms that the idolatry neither originated with him nor had his consent. In xx. 85 we are told that a fellow described as the Sāmiri had led them astray. We shall discuss this when we come to that passage.

1119. As Moses was convinced that his brother was guiltless, his wrath was turned to gentleness. He prayed for forgiveness—for himself and his brother: for himself because of his wrath and for his brother because he had been unable to suppress idolatry among his people. And like a true leader that he is, he identifies himself with his lieutenant for all that has happened. Even more, he identifies himself with his whole people in his prayer in verse 155 below. Herein, again, is a type of what the Holy Prophet Muhammad did for his people.

1120. The consequences were twofold: (1) spiritual, in that God's grace is withdrawn, and (2) even in the present life of this world, in that godly men also shun the sinner's company, and he is isolated.

154. When the anger of Moses
Was appeased, he took up
The Tablets: in the writing
Thereon was Guidance and Mercy
For such as fear their Lord.

155. And Moses chose seventy ¹¹²¹
Of his people for Our place
Of meeting: whey they
Were seized with violent
quaking, ¹¹²²
He prayed: "O my Lord!
If it had been Thy Will
Thou couldst have destroyed,
Long before, both them
And me: wouldst Thou
Destroy us for the deeds
Of the foolish ones among us?
This is no more than ¹¹²³
Thy trial: by it Thou causest
Whom Thou wilt to stray, ¹¹²⁴
And Thou ledest whom
Thou wilt into the right path.
Thou art our Protector:
So forgive us and give us
Thy mercy; for Thou art
The Best of those who forgive.

156. "And ordain for us
That which is good,
In this life
And in the Hereafter:
For we have turned unto Thee."
He said: "With My Punishment

١٥٤- وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَنْ مُوسَى الْغَضَبُ
أَخَذَ الْأَوَّلَةَ ۖ وَفِي سُخْرِيهَا هُدًى وَ
رَحْمَةٌ لِلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ ۝

١٥٥- وَاخْتَارَ مُوسَى قَوْمَهُ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا
لِإِيقَاتِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا أَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ
قَالَ رَبِّ
لَوْ شِئْتَ أَهْلَكْتَهُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَإِنِّي
أَنتَ أَهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الشَّافِعَاءُ مِنَّا ۖ
إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ
تُضِلُّ بِهَا مَنْ تَشَاءُ
وَتَهْدِي مَنْ تَشَاءُ
أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا
فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا
وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ ۝

١٥٦- وَالْكَتُبَ لَنَا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً
وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ
إِنَّا هُدْنَاكَ إِلَيْنِكَ ۖ قَالَ عَذَابِي

1121. Seventy of the elders were taken up to the Mount, but left at some distance from the place where God spoke to Moses. They were to be silent witnesses, but their faith was not yet complete, and they dared to say to Moses: "We shall never believe in thee until we see God in public" (ii. 55). They were dazed with thunder and lightning, and might have been destroyed but for God's mercy on the intercession of Moses.

1122. *Rajfal*: violent quaking, earthquake. I take it to refer to the same event as is described by the word *Sa'iqat* in ii. 55, the thunder and lightning that shook the mountain-side.

1123. Moses was guiltless, but he identifies himself with his whole people, and intercedes with God on their behalf. He recognises that it was a trial, in which some of his people failed to stand the test. Such failure was worthy of punishment. But he pleads for mercy for such as erred from weakness and not from contumacy, and were truly repentant, although all who erred were in their several degrees worthy of punishment.

1124. Cf. ii. 26.

I visit whom I will;
But My Mercy extendeth ¹¹²⁵
To all things. That (Mercy)
I shall ordain for those
Who do right, and practise
Regular charity, and those
Who believe in Our Signs;—¹¹²⁶

157. "Those who follow the Apostle,
The unlettered Prophet,
Whom they find mentioned
In their own (Scriptures),—¹¹²⁷
In the Law and the Gospel;—
For he commands them
What is just and forbids them
What is evil; he allows
Them as lawful what is good
(And pure) and prohibits them
From what is bad (and impure);
He releases them
From their heavy burdens
And from the yokes ¹¹²⁸
That are upon them.
So it is those who believe
In him, honour him,
Help him, and follow the Light
Which is sent down with him,—¹¹²⁹

أَصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ أَشَاءُ وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ
كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَسَأَلْتُهُمُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ
وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
١٥٤-الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ
النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا
عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ
يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ
وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ
إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ
وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ

1125. God's mercy is in and for all things. All nature subserves a common purpose, which is for the good of all His creatures. Our faculties and our understandings are all instances of His grace and mercy. Each unit or factor among his creatures benefits from the others and receives them as God's mercy to itself; and in its turn, each contributes to the benefit of the others and is thus an instance of God's mercy to them. His mercy is universal and all-pervasive; while His justice and punishment are reserved for those who swerve from His plan and (to use a mediæval juridical formula) go out of His Peace.

1126. The personal grace and mercy—and their opposite—are referred to the singular pronoun "I", while the impersonal Law, by which God's Signs operate in His universe, is referred to the plural pronoun of authority and dignity, "We".

1127. In this verse is a prefiguring to Moses of the Arabian Apostle, the last and greatest of the apostles of God. Prophecies about him will be found in the Taurāt and the Injil. In the reflex of the Taurāt as now accepted by the Jews, Moses says: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me" (Deut. xviii. 15); the only prophet who brought a Shar'at like that of Moses was Muḥammad Muṣṭafā, and he came of the House of Ismā'il the brother of Isaac the father of Israel. In the reflex of the Gospel as now accepted by the Christians, Christ promised another Comforter (John xiv. 16): the Greek word *Paraclete* which the Christians interpret as referring to the Holy Spirit is by our Doctors taken to be *Periclyte*, which would be the Greek form of Aḥmad. See Q. lxi. 6.

1128. *Aglāl*: plural of *gullun*, a yoke, an iron collar. In the formalism and exclusiveness of the Jews there were many restrictions which were removed by Islam, a religion of freedom in the faith of God, of universality in the variety of races, languages, manners and customs.

1129. *Light which is sent down with him*: the words are "with him", not "to him", emphasizing the fact that the Light which he brought illumines every one who has the privilege of joining his great and universal Fellowship.

It is they who will prosper."¹¹³⁰

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝

C. 87.—With the advent of the Holy Apostle,
(vii. 158-171.) The light and guidance which he brought
For all mankind from God
Superseded the earlier Law for the Jews.
The good and the upright among them
Followed the new Light, but
The rest were scattered through the earth.

SECTION 20.

158. Say : " O men ! I am sent ¹¹³¹
Unto you all, as the Apostle
Of God, to Whom belongeth
The dominion of the heavens
And the earth : there is no god
But He : it is He that giveth
Both life and death. So believe
In God and His Apostle,
The unlettered Prophet, ¹¹³²
Who believeth in God
And His Words : follow him
That (so) ye may be guided."

١٥٨- قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ
الْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ
فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ
الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ
وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ۝

159. Of the people of Moses
There is a section
Who guide and do justice
In the light of truth.

١٥٩- وَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى
أُمَّةٌ يَهْتَدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ ۝

1130. Falah=prosperity in its general sense as well as in its spiritual sense. In the general sense it means that right conduct is the only door to happiness and well-being. In the spiritual sense it means that Faith and its fruits (right conduct) are the only gates to salvation.

1131. Our attention having been directed to various apostles, who were sent with missions to their several peoples, and in each of whose careers there is some prefigurement of the life of the last and greatest of them, we are now asked to listen to the proclamation of Muḥammad's universal mission. We contemplate no longer, after this, partial truths. It is not now a question of saving Israel from the bondage of Egypt, nor teaching Midian the ethics of business, nor reclaiming the people of Lot from sexual sin or Thamūd from the sin of oppression in power, or 'Ad from arrogance and ancestor-worship. Now are set forth plainly the issues of Life and Death, the Message of the One Universal God to all mankind.

1132. "Unlettered," as applied to the Prophet here and in verse 157 above, has three special significations. (1) He was not versed in human learning; yet he was full of the highest wisdom, and had a most wonderful knowledge of the previous Scriptures. This was a proof of his inspiration. It was a miracle of the highest kind, a "Sign", which every one could test them, and every one can test now. (2) All organised human knowledge tends to be crystallized, to acquire a partial bias or flavour of some "school" of thought. The highest Teacher had to be free from any such taint, just as a clean slate is necessary if a perfectly clear and bold message has to be written on it. (3) In iii. 20 and lxii. 2, the epithet is applied to the Pagan Arabs, because, before the advent of Islam, they were unlearned. That the last and greatest of the Prophets should arise among them, and they, and their language be made the vehicle of the new, full, and universal light, has also a meaning, which is explained in C. 12-15.

160. We divided them into twelve
Tribes ¹¹³³

Or nations. We directed
Moses by inspiration,
When his (thirsty) people asked
Him for water: "Strike the rock
With thy staff": out of it
There gushed forth twelve springs:
Each group knew its own place
For water. We gave them
The shade of clouds, and sent
Down to them manna and quails,
(Saying): "Eat of the good things
We have provided for you":
(But they rebelled); to Us
They did no harm, but
They harmed their own souls. ¹¹³⁴

161. And remember it was
Said to them:
"Dwell in this town
And eat ¹¹³⁵ therein as ye wish,
But say the word of humility
And enter the gate
In a posture of humility:
We shall forgive you
Your faults; We shall increase
(The portion of) those who do
good."

162. But the transgressors among them
Changed the word from that
Which had been given them
So We sent on them
A plague from heaven,
For that they repeatedly
transgressed. ¹¹³⁶

SECTION 21.

163. Ask them concerning the town
Standing close by the sea.
Behold! they transgressed

١٦٠- وَقَطَعْنَاهُمْ اِثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ اَسْبَاطًا
اُمَمًا وَاَوْحَيْنَا اِلَى مُوسَى اِذَا اسْتَسْقٰهُ
قَوْمُهٗ اَنْ اَضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ
فَاُتْبِجْسَتْ مِنْهُ اِثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا
قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ اُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ
وَوَضَّعْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْغَمَامَ
وَاَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَنَّانَ وَالسَّلَوى
كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا
وَلٰكِنْ كَانُوا اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ

١٦١- وَاِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمْ اَسْكُنُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ
وَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ
وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ
وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا
نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطِيئَتَكُمْ
سَنَزِيدُ الْحَسَنِينَ

١٦٢- فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ
قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي
قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَاَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزًا مِّنَ
السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَظْلِمُوْنَ

١٦٣- وَسَأَلْنَاهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ
حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ اِذْ يَعْدُونَ

1133. We now come to some incidents in Jewish history, which have been referred to in ii. 57-60. Here they have special reference to their bearing on the times when early Islam was preached. The Twelve Tribes and the parable drawn from them have been explained in n. 73 to ii. 60.

1134. Cf. ii. 57 and n. 71.

1135. As in vii. 19, we may construe "eat" here to mean not only eating literally, but enjoying the good things of life.

1136. Cf. ii. 58-59, and n. 72. The story is here told by way of parable for the times of Islam. Hence we have a few verbal changes; e.g., "dwell in this town" instead of "enter this town," etc.

In the matter of the Sabbath.¹¹⁸⁷
 For on the day of their Sabbath
 Their fish did come to them,
 Openly holding up their heads,
 But on the day they had
 No Sabbath, they came not :
 Thus did We make a trial
 Of them, for they were
 Given to transgression.

فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيَتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ
 سَبْتِهِمْ شُرْعًا
 وَيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُونَ لَا تَأْتِيهِمْ
 كَذَلِكَ نَبْلُوهُمْ
 بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ○

164. When some of them said :
 " Why do ye preach
 To a people whom God
 Will destroy or visit
 With a terrible punishment ? " —¹¹⁸⁸
 Said the preachers : " To discharge
 Our duty to your Lord,
 And perchance they may fear
 Him."

۱۶۴- وَإِذْ قَالَتْ أُمَّةٌ مِّنْهُمْ
 لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْمًا اللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ
 أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا
 قَالُوا مَعذَرَةٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ
 وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ○

165. When they disregarded the
 warnings
 That had been given them,
 We rescued those who forbade
 Evil ; but We visited
 The wrong-doers with a
 Grievous punishment, because
 They were given to transgression.

۱۶۵- فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ
 أَنجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ السُّوءِ
 وَأَخَذْنَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
 بِعَذَابٍ بَّيِّنٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ○

166. When in their insolence
 They transgressed (all) prohibitions,
 We said to them :
 " Be ye apes,
 Despised and rejected." ¹¹⁸⁹

۱۶۶- فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَنْ مَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ
 قُلْنَا لَهُمْ
 كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ ○

1187. Cf. ii. 65, and n. 79. Fishing, like every other activity, was prohibited to Israel on the Sabbath day. As this practice was usually observed, the fish used to come up with a sense of security to their water channels or pools openly on the Sabbath day, but not on other days when fishing was open. This was a great temptation to the law-breakers, which they could not resist. Some of their men of piety protested, but it had no effect. When their transgressions, which, we may suppose, extended to other commandments, passed beyond bounds, the punishment came. They were despised among their own people, and became like apes, without law and without order or decency.

1188. There are always people who wonder, no doubt sincerely, what good it is to preach to the wicked. The answer is given to them here : (1) every man who sees evil must speak out against it ; it is his duty and responsibility to God ; (2) there is always a chance that the warning may have effect and save a precious soul. This passage has a special meaning for the times when our Holy Prophet was preaching in Mecca, apparently without results. But it applies to all times.

1189. Cf. ii. 65, n. 79.

167. Behold ! thy Lord did
declare ¹¹⁴⁰

That He would send
Against them, to the Day
Of Judgment, those who would
Afflict them with grievous
Penalty. Thy Lord is quick
In retribution, but He is also
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

168. We broke them up
Into sections on this earth. ¹¹⁴¹
There are among them some
That are the righteous, and some
That are the opposite.
We have tried them
With both prosperity and
adversity :

In order that they
Might turn (to Us).

169. After them succeeded '
An (evil) generation : they
Inherited the Book, but
They chose (for themselves) ¹¹⁴²
The vanities of this world,
Saying (for excuse) : " (Everything)
Will be forgiven us."
(Even so), if similar vanities
Came their way, they would
(Again) seize them.
Was not the Covenant ¹¹⁴³
Of the Book taken from them,
That they would not
Ascribe to God anything

١٦٧- وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكَ لَيَبْعَثَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ
إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ
مَنْ يَسُوْمُهُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَسَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ
وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ○

١٦٨- وَقَطَعْنَاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُمَمًا
مِنْهُمْ الصَّالِحِينَ
وَمِنْهُمْ دُونَ ذَلِكَ
وَبَلَوْنَاهُمْ بِالْحَسَنَاتِ
وَالشَّرَّائِاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ○

١٦٩- فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ
وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ
يَأْخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَذَا الْأَدْنَى
وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا
وَإِنْ يَأْتِهِمْ عَرَضٌ مِثْلُ
يَأْخُذُوهُ
أَلَمْ يُؤْخَذْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِيثَاقُ الْكِتَابِ
أَنْ لَا يَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ

1140. See Deut. xi. 28 : "A curse if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day"; also Deut. xxviii. 49 : "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth ; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand" ; and many other passages.

1141. The dispersal of the Jews is a great fact in the world's history. Nor has their persecution ended yet, nor is it likely to end as far as we can foresee.

1142. Merely inheriting a Book, or doing lip service to it, does not make a nation righteous. If they succumb to the temptations of the world, their hypocrisy becomes all the more glaring. "High finance" is one of these temptations. Cf. also ii. 80 : "The Fire shall not touch us except for a few numbered days" ; and ii. 88, about their blasphemous self-sufficiency.

1143. Cf. Exod. xix. 5-8 ; xxiv. 3 ; xxxiv. 27 ; and many other passages.

But the truth ? And they
Study what is in the Book.
But best for the righteous
Is the Home in the Hereafter.
Will ye not understand ?

170. As to those who hold fast
By the Book and establish
Regular Prayer,—never
Shall We suffer the reward
Of the righteous to perish.

171. When We shook the Mount
Over them, as if it had been
A canopy, and they thought
It was going to fall on them
(We said) : " Hold firmly ¹¹⁴⁴
To what We have given you,
And bring (ever) to remembrance
What is therein ; ¹¹⁴⁵
Perchance ye may fear God."

إِلَّا الْحَقَّ وَدَرَسُوا مَا فِيهِ
وَالَّذِينَ الْأَخْرَجُوا خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ
أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ
وَالَّذِينَ يُسَيِّئُونَ بِمَا كُتِبَ
وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ
إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ
وَلَا إِذْ نُنْفِثُ الْجِبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ
كَانَهُ ظُلُمَةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ
خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ
وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

C. 88.—Mankind have the nature of good
(vii. 172-206.) Created within them : yet doth God
By His Signs keep up a constant
Reminder to men of His holy names.
Those who err scarce realise
How gradually they fall into sin.
Their respite has a term ; the doom
Must come, and it may be on a sudden.
So humbly draw nigh to the Lord,
Declare His glory, and rejoice in His service.

SECTION 22.

172. ~~When~~ When thy Lord drew forth ¹¹⁴⁶
From the Children of Adam—

وَلَا إِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ

1144. Cf. ii. 63 and n.

1145. *Therein*—in the Book or Revelation, in " what We have given you."

1146. This passage has led to differences of opinion in interpretation. Does it mean that each individual in the posterity of Adam had a separate existence from the time of Adam, and that a Covenant was taken from all of them, which is binding accordingly on each individual ? That question really does not arise. The words in the text refer to the descendants of the Children of Adam, i.e., to all humanity, born or unborn, without any limit of time. Adam's seed carries on the existence of Adam, and succeed to his spiritual heritage. Humanity as such has a corporate aspect. Humanity has been given by God certain powers and faculties, whose possession creates on our side special spiritual obligations, which we must faithfully discharge ; see v. 1, and n. 682. These obligations may from a legal point of view be considered as arising from implied Covenants. In the preceding verse (vii. 171) a reference was made to the implied Covenant of the Jewish nation. Now we consider the implied Covenant of the whole of humanity, for the Holy Apostle's mission was world-wide.

From their loins—
 Their descendants, and made
 them
 Testify concerning themselves,
 (saying) :
 "Am I not your Lord
 (Who cherishes and sustains
 you) ?"—
 They said : " Yea !
 We do testify ! " ¹¹⁴⁷ (This), lest
 Ye should say on the Day
 Of Judgment : " Of this we
 Were never mindful " :

173. Or lest ye should say :
 " Our fathers before us
 May have taken false gods,
 But we are (their) descendants
 After them : wilt Thou then
 Destroy us because of the deeds
 Of men who were futile ? " ¹¹⁴⁸

174. Thus do We explain
 The Signs in detail ;
 And perchance they may turn
 (Unto Us).

175. **R**elate to them the story ¹¹⁴⁹
 Of the man to whom
 We sent Our Signs,
 But he passed them by :

مِنْ طُغْيَانِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ
 وَأَشْهَدُهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ
 أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ
 قَالُوا بَلَىٰ
 شَهِدْنَا

أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
 إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ
 أَوْ تَقُولُوا

إِنَّمَا أَشْرَكَ آبَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ
 وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ
 أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ

وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ الْأَيَاتِ
 وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

وَأَتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ
 آيَاتِنَا فَاسْتَكْبَرَ مِنْهَا

1147. The Covenant is completed in this way. We acknowledge that God is our Creator, Cherisher, and Sustainer : therefore we acknowledge our duty to Him : when we so testify concerning ourselves, the obligation is as it were assumed by us ; for it follows from our very nature when it is pure and uncorrupted.

1148 The latent faculties in man are enough to teach him the distinction between good and evil, to warn him of the dangers that beset his life. But to awaken and stimulate them, a personal appeal is made to each individual through the " still small voice " within him. This in its uncorrupted state acknowledges the truth and metaphorically swears its Covenant with God. There is, therefore, no excuse for any individual to say, either (1) that he was unmindful, or (2) that he should not be punished for the sins of his fathers because his punishment (if any) comes from his personal responsibility and is for his own rejection of faith and the higher spiritual influences.

1149. Commentators differ whether this story or parable refers to a particular individual, and if so, to whom. The story of Balaam the seer, who was called out by Israel's enemies to curse Israel, but who blessed Israel instead, (Num. xxii., xxiii., xxiv.) is quite different. It is better to take the parable in a general sense. There are men of talents and position, to whom great opportunities of spiritual insight come, but they perversely pass them by. Satan sees his opportunity and catches them up. Instead of rising higher in the spiritual world, their selfish and worldly desires and ambitions pull them down, and they are lost.

So Satan followed him up,
And he went astray.

176. If it had been Our Will,
We should have elevated him
With Our Signs; but he
Inclined to the earth,
And followed his own vain
desires.¹¹⁵⁰

His similitude is that
Of a dog: if you attack
Him, he lolls out his tongue,
Or if you leave him alone,
He (still) lolls out his tongue.¹¹⁵¹
That is the similitude
Of those who reject Our Signs;
So relate the story;
Perchance they may reflect.

177. Evil as an example are
People who reject Our Signs
And wrong their own souls.

178. Whom God doth guide,—
He is on the right path:
Whom He rejects from His
guidance,—
Such are the persons who perish.¹¹⁵²

179. Many are the Jinns and men
We have made for Hell:
They have hearts wherewith they
Understand not, eyes
wherewith¹¹⁵³

فَاتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ○

١٧٦- وَلَوْ شَاءْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا
وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ
وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ

فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ
إِنْ تَحِيلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ
أَوْ تَتْرَكْهُ يَلْهَثْ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ
الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
فَأُفْصِحَ الْقَصَصُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ○

١٧٧- سَاءَ مَثَلًا الْقَوْمُ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا
بِآيَاتِنَا وَأَنْفُسَهُمْ كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ ○

١٧٨- مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ
وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ○

١٧٩- وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا
مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا
يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ

1150. Notice the contrast between the exalted spiritual honours which they would have received from God if they had followed His Will, and earthly desires which eventually bring them low to the position of beasts and worse.

1151. The dog, especially in the hot weather, lolls out his tongue, whether he is attacked and pursued and is tired, or he is left alone. It is part of his nature to slobber. So with the man who rejects God. Whether he is warned or left alone, he continues to throw out his dirty saliva. The injury he will do will be to his own soul. But there may be infection in his evil example. So we must protect others. And we must never give up hope of his own amendment. So we must continue to warn him and make him think.

1152. Those who reject God will be deprived of God's grace and guidance. His Mercy is always open for sincere repentance. But with each step downwards, they go lower and lower, until they perish.

1153. Cf. ii. 18. Though they have apparently all the faculties of reason and perception, they have so deadened them that those faculties do not work, and they go headlong into Hell. They are, as it were, made for Hell.

They see not, and ears wherewith
They hear not. They are.
Like cattle,—nay more
Misguided : for they
Are heedless (of warning).

لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَذَانٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ
بِهَا أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ
بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ ○

180. **¶** The most beautiful names ¹¹⁵⁴
Belong to God :
So call on Him by them ;
But shun such men as
Use profanity in His names :
For what they do, they will
Soon be requited.

١٨٠- وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى
فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذُرُوا الَّذِينَ
يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ
سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

181. **¶** Of those We have created
Are people who direct
(Others) with truth,
And dispense justice therewith.

١٨١- وَمِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا أُمَّةً يَهْدُونَ
بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْتَدِلُونَ ○

SECTION 23.

182. **¶** Those who reject Our Signs,
We shall gradually visit
With punishment, in ways
They perceive not ;

١٨٢- وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُم مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

183. Respite will I grant
Unto them : for My scheme
Is strong (and unfailing).

١٨٣- وَأَمْلِي لَهُمْ
إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ ○

184. Do they not reflect ?
Their Companion is not seized ¹¹⁵⁵

١٨٤- أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا لِمَا بِصَاحِبِهِم

1154. As we contemplate God's nature, we can use the most beautiful names we can think of, to express His attributes. There are hundreds of such attributes. In the opening Sūra, we have these indicated in a few comprehensive words, such as *Rahmān* (most Gracious), *Rahīm* (most Merciful), *Rabb-ul-'ālamīn* (Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds). Our bringing such names to remembrance is part of our Prayer and Praise. But we must not associate with people who use God's names profanely, or so as to suggest anything derogatory to His dignity or His unity. Cf. xvii. 110.

1155. *Their companion*, i.e., the Holy Apostle, who lived with and amongst them. He was accused of madness because he behaved differently from them. He had no selfish ambitions ; he was always true, in thought, word, and deed : he was kind and considerate to the weak, and was not dazzled by worldly power or wealth or position : he was undeterred by fear of the strong, the mockery of the cynics, the bitterness of the evil, or the indifference of the heedless. That is why he stood out boldly against wrong : he did not mince his words, and his warnings were not mealy-mouthed.

With madness : he is but
A perspicuous warner.¹¹⁵⁶

185. Do they see nothing
In the government of the heavens
And the earth and all
That God hath created ? ¹¹⁵⁷
(Do they not see) that
It may well be that
Their term is nigh
Drawing to an end ?
In what Message after this
Will they then believe ?

136. To such as God rejects
From His guidance, there can be
No guide : He will
Leave them in their trespasses,
Wandering in distraction.¹¹⁵⁸

187. They ask thee about
The (final) Hour—when
Will be its appointed time ?
Say : " The knowledge thereof
Is with my Lord (alone) :
None but He can reveal
As to when it will occur.¹¹⁵⁹
Heavy were its burden through
The heavens and the earth.
Only, all of a sudden
Will it come to you."
They ask thee as if thou

فَمِنْ حَتَّةٍ إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ٥

۱۸۵- أَوَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا فِي مَكَلُوتِ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضِ وَ مَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
وَ اَنْ عَلٰى اَنْ يَكُوْنَ قَدْ اَقْتَرَبَ اَجَلُهُمْ
فَبَايْتِ حَدِيثٍ
بَعْدَ هٰذَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ٥

۱۸۶- مَنْ يُضِلّ اللّٰهُ
فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ

وَيَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُوْنَ ٥

۱۸۷- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ
اَيَّانَ مَرْسِلُهَا قُلْ اِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا
عِنْدَ رَبِّي لَا يُجَلِّيهَا لِوَقْتِهَا
اِلَّا هُوَ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ
لَا تَاْتِيَكُمْ اِلَّا بَغْتَةً
يَسْأَلُونَكَ كَاَنَّكَ

1156. *Mubīn* ; perspicuous. The reason why I have not used a simpler word, such as "plain" or "clear" is explained in n. 716 to v. 17. Muṣṭafā's sermons were not polite reminders, with an eye to the flattery of weaknesses in high places or national vanities or crowd passions. They brought out every foible into the glare of light, by a fiery eloquence fed by inspiration from God.

1157. An appeal to God's most wonderful universe should at once convince a thinking mind of man's nothingness, and God's power, glory, and goodness. Man's term here is fleeting. If he is not warned by the great Signs, and the Messages which call his attention to them, is he capable of any faith at all ?

1158. Cf. ii, 15. If God's light is removed, the best of them can only wander hither and thither, like blind men, in distraction.

1159. The fact of its coming is a certainty ; the exact time appointed for it is not revealed by God. If it were, it would be so momentous as to disturb our thoughts and life. It would be a heavy burden to us. Our duty is to be prepared for it at all times. It will come when we least expect it. In the present Gospels Jesus says the same thing : he does not know the Hour, but it will come suddenly. " But of that day and that Hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray : for ye know not when the time is," (Mark, xiii. 32-33.)

Wert eager in search thereof :¹¹⁶⁰
 Say : " The knowledge thereof
 Is with God (alone),
 But most men know not."

183. Say : " I have no power
 Over any good or harm
 To myself except as God
 Willeth. If I had knowledge
 Of the unseen, I should have
 Multiplied all good, and no evil
 Should have touched me :
 I am but a warner,
 And a bringer of glad tidings
 To those who have faith." ¹¹⁶¹

SECTION 24.

189. It is He Who created
 You from a single person,
 And made his mate
 Of like nature,¹¹⁶² in order
 That he might dwell with her
 (In love). When they are
 United, she bears a light
 Burden and carries it about
 (Unnoticed). When she grows
 Heavy, they both pray ¹¹⁶³
 To God their Lord, (saying) :
 " If Thou givest us
 A goodly child, ¹¹⁶⁴

حَفِيٌّ عَنْهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
 وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○

188- قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا
 ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ
 أَعْلَمُ الْغُيُوبِ
 لَا سَتَكُنُّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ
 وَمَا مَسَّنِي السُّوءُ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ
 وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

189- هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ
 وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا
 فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّيَا
 حَمَلٌ خَفِيٌّ
 فَكُنَّ بِهِ
 فَكُلَّمَا أَثْقَلَتْ
 دَعَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْتَنَا صَالِحًا

1160. *Hafi* is usually construed to mean : "eager or anxious in search of" : the preposition following here is 'a= concerning, about. Some commentators (including Rāḡib) understand it in this passage to mean "well-acquainted." In xix. 47, with the preposition *bi* following it, it signifies "well-disposed to", "favourable to, good to, kind to."

1161. A warner to all, and a bringer of glad tidings to those who have faith, because they will profit by the glad tidings. As every one is invited to faith, the glad tidings are offered to all, but they are not necessarily accepted by all.

1162. Cf. iv. 1, and n. 504, where the construction is explained.

1163. The mystery of the physical birth of man, as it affects the father and the mother, only touches the imagination of the parents in the later stages when the child is yet unborn and yet the life stirs within the body of the expectant mother. The coming of the new life is a solemn thing, and is fraught with much hope as well as much unknown risk to the mother herself. The parents in their anxiety turn to God. If this feeling of solemnity, hope, and looking towards God were maintained after birth, all would be well for the parents as well as for the rising generation. But the attitude changes, as the verses following show.

1164. *Goodly* : *ṣāliḥ* : includes the following ideas : sound in body and mind ; healthy ; righteous ; of good moral disposition.

We vow we shall
(Ever) be grateful."

190. But when He giveth them
• A goodly child, they ascribe ¹¹⁶⁵
To others a share in the gift
They have received :
But God is exalted
High above the partners
They ascribe to Him.

191. Do they indeed ascribe
To Him as partners things
That can create nothing,
But are themselves created ?

192. No aid can they give them,
Nor can they aid themselves !

193. If ye call them to guidance,
They will not obey :
For you it is the same
Whether ye call them
Or ye hold your peace ! ¹¹⁶⁶

194. ~~W~~erily those whom ye
Call upon besides God
Are servants like unto you : ¹¹⁶⁷
Call upon them, and let them
Listen to your prayer,
If ye are (indeed) truthful !

195. Have they feet to walk with ?
Or hands to lay hold with ?

لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ○

١٩٠- فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمَا صَالِحًا

جَعَلَا لَهُ شُرَكَاءَ

فِيمَا آتَاهُمَا

فَتَعَلَّى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ○

١٩١- أَيْشْرِكُونَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْئًا

وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ○

١٩٢- وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا وَ

لَا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَنْصُرُونَ ○

١٩٣- وَإِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى

لَا يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

أَدْعَوْنَهُمْ أَمْ أَنْتُمْ صَادِقُونَ ○

١٩٤- إِنْ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

عِبَادٌ أَكْثَرُكُمْ فَادْعُوهُمْ

فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا الْكَلِمَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ○

١٩٥- أَلَهُمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَا

أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَا

1165. When the child is born, the parents forget that it is a precious gift of God,—a miracle of Creation, which should lift their minds up to the higher things of God. Instead, their gradual familiarity with the new life makes them connect it with many superstitious ideas or rites and ceremonies, or they take it as a matter of course, as a little plaything of the material world. This leads to idolatry or false worship, or the setting up of false standards, in derogation of the dignity of God.

1166. When false worship takes root, the teacher of Truth finds much to discourage him. As far as he is concerned, it seems as if he has produced no effect. Yet his duty is to continue his work, in the spirit of verse 199 below, forgiving all opposition, teaching what is right, and not joining the ignorant in their attitude of doubt and indecision.

1167. False gods whether idols or deified men, or ideas and superstitions, have no existence of their own, independent of God's creation. They are God's creatures, and like servants are subject to His authority. Deified men are not real men, but false ideas of men. They cannot help themselves; how can they help others ?

Or eyes to see with ?
Or ears to hear with ?
Say : " Call your 'god-partners',¹¹⁶⁸
Scheme (your worst) against me,
And give me no respite !

196. "For my Protector is God,
Who revealed the Book
(From time to time),
And He will choose
And befriend the righteous.

197. "But those ye call upon
Beside Him, are unable
To help you, and indeed
To help themselves."

198. If thou callest them
To guidance, they hear not.
Thou wilt see them
Looking at thee, but
They see not.¹¹⁶⁹

199. Hold to forgiveness ;
Command what is right ;
But turn away from the ignorant.¹¹⁷⁰

200. If a suggestion from Satan
Assail thy (mind),¹¹⁷¹

أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ
أَذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا قُلْ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ
ثُمَّ كِيدُوا فَلَا تُنْظَرُونَ ○

١٩٦-إِنَّ وَلِيََّ اللَّهُ
الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ
وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ ○

١٩٧-وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَكُمْ وَلَا أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَنْصُرُونَ ○

١٩٨-وَأِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى
لَا يَسْمَعُوا وَتَرَاهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ
وَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ○

١٩٩-خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ
وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ ○

٢٠٠-وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ

1168. Here is a test and a challenge. If the false gods had any power or even existence, collect them all together, and, says the man of God, "Let them do their worst against me." They cannot because the whole thing is based on a superstition and a chimæra.

1169. The beauty and righteousness of Muṣṭafā's life were acknowledged on all hands, until he received the mission to preach and to fight against evil. What happened then? Evil erected barricades for itself. It had eyes, but it refused to see. It had ears, but it refused to hear. It had intelligence, but it blocked up its channels of understanding. Even now, after thirteen centuries and a half, a life of unexampled purity, probity, justice, and righteousness is seen in false lights by blind detractors !

1170. God comforts the Apostle and directs his mind to three precepts : (1) to forgive injuries, insults, and persecution ; (2) to continue to declare the faith that was in him, and not only to declare it, but to act up to it in all his dealings with friends and foes ; (3) to pay no attention to ignorant fools, who raised doubts or difficulties, hurled taunts or reproaches, or devised plots to defeat the truth : they were to be ignored and passed by, not to be engaged in fights and fruitless controversies, or conciliated by compromises.

1171. Even a man of God is but human. He might think that revenge or retaliation, or a little tactful silence when evil stalks abroad, or some compromise with ignorance, might be best for the cause. He is to reject such suggestions.

Seek refuge with God ;
For He heareth and knoweth
(All things).

201. Those who fear God,
When a thought of evil
From Satan assaults them,
Bring God to remembrance,
When lo ! they see (aright) ! ¹¹⁷²

202. But their brethren (the evil
ones) ¹¹⁷³
Plunge them deeper into error,
And never relax (their efforts).

203. If thou bring them not
A revelation, ¹¹⁷⁴ they say :
" Why hast thou not
Got it together ? "
Say : " I but follow
What is revealed to me
From my Lord :
This is (nothing but)
Lights from your Lord, ¹¹⁷⁵
And Guidance, and Mercy,
For any who have Faith."

204. When the Qur-ān is read,
Listen to it with attention,

فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ
إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥

٢٠١- إِنْ الدِّينَ اتَّقُوا
إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ
تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ ٥

٢٠٢- وَإِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّوْنَ لَهُمُ فِي الْعَنَى
لَمْ يَلْبِثُوا يَمْعُرُونَ ٥

٢٠٣- وَإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِمْ بَآيَةٌ
قَالُوا لَوْلَا اجْتَبَيْنَاهَا
قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنبِئُكُمْ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَىٰ مِن رَّبِّي
هَذَا بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ
لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ٥

٢٠٤- وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ

1172. God protects His own, as no one else can. He is the sure refuge—and the only one—for men of faith. If we are confused or angry, being blinded by this world, He will open our eyes.

1173. We go back to consider the ungodly, whom we left at verse 198, in order to be taught our behaviour towards evil. The forces of evil never relax their efforts to draw their "brethren" (those who go into their family) deeper and deeper into the mire of sin and destruction.

1174. "Ayat" here, I think, means specially an Ayat of the Holy Qur-ān. The infidels did not believe in revelation, and used to taunt the Holy Apostle, as much as to say that he used to put together words and promulgate them as revelation. The answer is contained in the sentence that follows. No human composition could contain the beauty, power, and spiritual insight of the Qur-ān. Without inspiration it is impossible to suppose that a man, with or without literary and philosophic training, could produce such a book as the Qur-ān.

1175. "Lights" : eyes, faculty of spiritual insight. The revelation is for us (1) spiritual eyes, (2) guidance, and (3) mercy. (1) is the highest in degree : just as a blind man, if he is given eyes and the faculty of sight, is at once removed into an entirely new world, so those who can reach the stage of spiritual insight pass into and become citizens of a wholly new spiritual World. (2) is next in degree ; the man of the world can act up to the teaching about right conduct, and prepare for the Hereafter. (3) is the Mercy of God ; free to every one, saint and sinner, who sincerely believes and puts his trust in God.

And hold your peace :
That ye may receive Mercy.

205. And do thou (O reader!) .
Bring thy Lord to remembrance
In thy (very) soul,
With humility and in reverence,
Without loudness in words,
In the mornings and evenings ;
And be not thou
Of those who are unheedful.

206. Those who are near ¹¹⁷⁶
To thy Lord, disdain not
To do Him worship :
They celebrate His praises,
And bow down before Him. ¹¹⁷⁷

وَأَنْصِتُوا لِعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۝

٢٠٥- وَأَذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَ
خِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ
يَا غَدُوَّ وَالْأَصَالِ
وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ ۝

٢٠٦- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ
لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ
وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ ۝



1176 The higher you are in spiritual attainment, the more is your desire and your opportunity to serve and worship your Lord and Cherisher and the Lord and Cherisher of all the worlds; and the greater is your pride in that service and that worship.

1177. At this stage a *Sajda* or prostration is indicated, as symbolical of our humble acceptance of the privilege of serving and worshipping God,—a fitting close to a *Sūra* in which we are led, through a contemplation of the stories of the Messengers of God, to the meaning of revelation and its relation to our moral and spiritual progress

APPENDIX IV.

Egyptian Chronology and Israel (see vii. 104, n. 1072)

In order to get some idea of the comparative chronology of Egypt and Israel, we must first consider what data we have for Egyptian chronology. Israel's surviving records date from a time many centuries later than Israel's contact with Egypt. On the other hand Egypt's records in monuments, inscriptions, tombs, etc., are rich and absolutely reliable as far as they go.

Of the surviving old civilizations, Egypt and China go back furthest in time with historical material. Egypt has the more interest for us, because geographically she was centrally situated, and she influenced and was influenced by almost every important cultural movement in Asia, Europe, and Africa. Nothing happened in Mediterranean history that had not some points of contact with Egypt.

The first broad division in Egyptian chronology is between the pre-Dynastic and the Dynastic periods. The pre-Dynastic period is all pre-history. But recent researches have thrown a great deal of light on the culture of that period, and we know many more details about the arts and tools of that period in Egypt than we do for the corresponding periods of pre-history in other countries.

With the first Egyptian Dynasty of rulers begins the Dynastic period. What were the Egyptian Dynasties, and why is so much prominence given to them in Egyptian chronology? The reason is that though we can form a graphic idea of the sequence of events and in many cases of the details of events, arts and crafts, manners and customs, cults and ceremonies, and social and economic conditions in the Dynastic period, we are not yet able, except for occasional and isolated glimpses, to give any accurate figures of early dates to connect them with our chronology B.C. On the other hand we have abundant materials to justify us in placing certain events or personages or ideas in some division of the Dynastic scheme. We can say that such and such ideas held sway under the 18th Dynasty or that such and such invasion, outwards or inwards, took place at the close of the 14th Dynasty.

The Dynastic scheme rests mainly on the lists and fragments preserved from the writings of one Manetho, an Egyptian priest and annalist, who lived under Ptolemy I and Ptolemy II (B.C. 313-246), the inheritors of the Egyptian portion of Alexander's Empire. For his Egyptian history in Greek he had access to Egyptian records. His scheme of Dynasties therefore supplies a rough chronological frame-work into which can be fitted our ever-increasing detailed knowledge derived from Egyptian monuments, tombs, and excavations. His first Dynasty begins with the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt, but its actual date B.C. has been placed at between such wide margins as 5500 B.C. and 3300 B.C.

The two Egypts may be considered distinct ethnical and perhaps geographical divisions, which tend to assimilate when they are united politically, but whose physical

characteristics are different, as also their outlook when there is political division. Lower Egypt looks to the Mediterranean, and its population is mixed, containing almost all the Mediterranean and Arab elements, while Upper Egypt looks to interior Africa (Nubia, Sudan, Abyssinia, etc.), and its population tends to have more and more African characteristics. The whole of Egypt has had a ribbon development, the population and cultivation being confined to the banks of the Nile. Without the Nile Egypt would be just a desert forming a link in the long chain of tropical and sub-tropical deserts stretching from the Sahara, the Libyan desert, the Arabian deserts, through the Persian, Baluchistan, Sindh, and Rajputana deserts, to the Turki and Gobi deserts in Central Asia. But Upper Egypt is purely a long irregular line along the banks of the Nile, while Lower Egypt has the broad fan-like delta in which the many mouths of the Nile run into a very irregular coast-line extending over about 200 miles.

- Lower Egypt had (and has) much marsh-land, and its low-lying configuration was subject to many physical changes, in the same way as invasions and foreign immigrations gave its population a less stable character. Its cities, such as Sais and Tanis (Zoan), were also less stable in character, and Memphis (near the site of modern Cairo) had to be just above the Delta. On the other hand the Capitals in Upper Egypt, such as Thebes (or No), with their magnificent temples and tombs were safe above Nile waters in the highest inundations until the modern dam of Asuān was built many miles above them. Even after the union of the two Egypts, the King wore a double crown. The boundary between Upper and Lower Egypt was never clearly defined, because in spite of frequent interruptions in the unity of the country, the identification of Egypt with the Nile made the unity of Egypt a political and economic necessity. The present boundary of Lower Egypt is just south of Cairo, making Lower Egypt include just the Delta. The tract between Cairo and Assiut is sometimes called Middle Egypt and is distinguished from the rest of Upper Egypt, which is higher up the river.

There being such wide variations in the estimate of ancient dates by competent authorities, the only practicable course is to refer ancient events to Dynasties according to Manetho's scheme. In the later dates it is sometimes possible to express a date in approximate figures B.C., but such figures are uncertain, whereas the sequence of Dynasties may be taken to be a stable fact in Egyptian history, although some of Manetho's material, when it can be tested, has proved to be inaccurate. But we have only Manetho second-hand. The inaccuracies may be due not to Manetho but to his transmitters. Thirty-one such Dynasties are reckoned, and they may be grouped into Periods as follows:—

I. The Old Kingdom, Dynasties I to VIII, including (a) the first three Dynasties, with a new orientation in Egyptian Art, and (b) Dynasties IV to VI, the Pyramid Period, during which the Great Pyramid and the second and third Pyramids of Ghizeh were built. The capital now came to Lower Egypt, to the site of Memphis, near modern Cairo.

II The Middle Kingdom, Dynasties IX to XVII. In Dynasties IX and X the centre of gravity moved from Memphis in Lower Egypt to Middle Egypt. In the XIIth Dynasty many of the great monuments of and near Thebes (Karnak, Luxor, etc.), were constructed. Perhaps the movement higher up the river was necessitated by

foreign invasions in Lower Egypt. Dynasties XV to XVII are called the Hyksos Period, when a Syrian Dynasty was established in Lower Egypt, with a sort of lordship over the native Dynasties of Upper Egypt, and international connections in other Mediterranean countries. We shall presently speak of the Hyksos Pharaohs, who have been placed in the 17th, 18th, and even 26th century B.C.

III. The New Empire, Dynasties XVIII to XX, crowded with events. The dates now begin to be more definite : the period may be placed between about 1580 B.C. and about 1200 B.C. The foreign Hyksos were driven out ; the empire was extended to Syria and Nubia ; perhaps even the Euphrates was reached. Some of the most wonderful works of Egyptian art date from this period.

IV. The Dynasties of the Delta, Dynasties XXI to XXXI, including a Dynasty at Sais (on one of the western branches of the Deltaic Nile). But Assyrian and Persian invasions were now weakening the power of Egypt. The dates now became more certain. The XXIst Dynasty was roughly about 1100 B.C. The XXVIIth Dynasty was ended by the invasion of the Persians under Cambyses in 525 B.C. The Persians held sway (with Egyptian local dynasties under them) until the XXXIst Dynasty, when the last Pharaoh fled to Ethiopia about 340 B.C.

V. The Egyptian Dynasties have now ended, and we are in firm history : the Macedonian Period after Alexander's conquest, 332 B.C., and the Dynasty of the Ptolemies, 323 B.C. to 30 B.C. ; and the Roman Period 30 B.C. to 639 A.D., after which the Arab and Turkish conquests evolved modern Egypt and Muslim Egyptian civilization.

Having cleared the chronological background, we are now in a position to examine the data about Israel's stay in Egypt in order to see if we can get some idea of the time in Egyptian history when the contact took place. We saw that Dynasties XV to XVII were concerned with the Hyksos (or Shepherd) kings. They were foreigners from Asia, but it is not quite clear exactly what race they belonged to. Josephus supposed that they were Israelites, but that theory is untenable. It has been conjectured that they were Phoenicians, or Amalekites, or Hittites. In any case they were Semites. They founded a city called Zoan (Tanis) on one of the eastern branches of the Deltaic Nile, and were in close communication with the Hittite city of Hebron in the south of Palestine. That would be their own city, but their capital would probably be the same as the old Egyptian capital at Memphis when they were well-established. They are credited with having invented the Semitic alphabet of 22 letters, which (through the Phoenician) is the parent of all modern alphabets. Their invention probably helped in the process of converting old Egyptian Hieroglyphics from picture-writing to phonetic writing. As the Hyksos had close relations with Hebron in Palestine, and Abraham and Israel had settled in the Palestine country, a nexus would be established, by which the first Israelites would be attracted to Zoan in Egypt. It must also be remembered that southern Palestine was a poor country and subject to frequent famines, while Deltaic Egypt was well-watered by the Nile, and suffered from famines only on the rare occasions when the Nile failed to inundate. The attraction of Egypt for the famine-stricken lands of the neighbourhood would therefore be strong. And this is proved in the story of Joseph and his brethren.

Can we form even a rough idea of the dates of the Hyksos occupation? At the latest the Hyksos period ended about 1600 B.C. Renan is therefore probably not far wrong when he places the Hyksos occupation about 2000 B.C. Possibly a date between 2000 B.C. and 1600 B.C. may be nearer the mark. If we suppose Joseph to have been the Wazîr of one of the Hyksos Pharaohs in the Delta, there is no great violence of probabilities in the suggestion, as Joseph and the Hyksos would be of kindred races. In that case Joseph's date would fall somewhere between the 19th and the 17th century B.C.

No reference to Joseph or Moses has been found in Egyptian records. The solitary reference to Israel (*Ysraer*, r=1) in a stele of Mer-en-Ptah or Mineptah (about 1225 B.C.) seems to refer to Israel in Palestine rather than to Israel in Egypt. At this we need not wonder, as the Pharaoh who honoured Joseph was strictly speaking only a foreigner. When the reaction against the Hyksos took place and the Hyksos were overthrown, the Egyptians would not probably be anxious to remember the interrupted period or to preserve its memory. The Pharaoh who "knew not Joseph" looked upon the Israelites as contemptible slaves, not worthy of a thought except when they revolted, and then only as a despised race fit to be punished and kept in its place. It may be noticed, however, that the land of Goshen in which Israel dwelt and multiplied between the time of Joseph and the time of the Exodus, was a frontier tract of Egypt in the neighbourhood of the Hyksos city of Zoan in the Delta.

In seeking the approximate date of Moses, we must again look to the probabilities of Egyptian history. It was formerly the received opinion that Rameses II (say about 1250 B.C.) was the Pharaoh who oppressed Israel in Egypt, and that the exodus may have taken place under his immediate successor Mineptah (say about 1225 B.C.). The vigorous policy of Rameses II and the spirit of his time would be consistent with this view. But this date is almost certainly too late. There are indications pointing to the Israelites having already been settled in Canaan by this time. The Hyksos were turned out by the XVIIIth Dynasty, which established the New Empire in the 16th century B.C. Thothmes I (Tethmosis I, about 1540 B.C.) is more likely, in the first flush of his nationalist campaign, to have oppressed the Israelites and led to the exodus. His date fits in better. And his character also accords with the description in sacred history. He centralised the monarchy and made it a military autocracy. Militarism went with the lust of war and foreign conquest. He carried his arms as far as the Euphrates. Slaves, plunder, and foreign tribute made Egypt opulent and arrogant, and he added many monuments to Thebes. We can imagine him in his splendid Court, scarcely paying any attention to Moses, and viewing all his complaints with amusement mingled with contempt and impatience. But retribution was to come in God's good time. The men who followed God's message—Israel in the time of Solomon (a little after 1000 B.C.), and more completely, the Muslims in the time of *Hadhrat 'Umar* and his successors—became lords of the East and the West (Q. vii. 137), and ancient Egypt's glories were eventually buried in the sands.

It was this same Pharaoh, Thothmes I, who took for his partner on the Throne his daughter Hatshepshut. If Thothmes was the Pharaoh in Moses's story, we may

suppose that it was this same celebrated strong-minded lady, Pharaoh's daughter, who found the child Moses (Exod. ii. 10), and brought him to her mother to be adopted into the family (Q. xxviii. 9). Like her father, she was a great supporter of the national cults. Moses was nurtured in the palace, and learned all the wisdom of the Egyptians, then reputed to be the wisest of the nations. With their own wisdom he foiled them. Thus in God's Plan the enemies of God and the enemies of Israel (Q. xx. 39) were the very ones who were used as instruments for the purposes of God and the salvation of Israel.

References : E. B., *Egypt* ; D. A. Mackenzie, *Egyptian Myth and Legend* ; Renan, *History of the People of Israel*, 3 vols. ; Joseph Cattani Pasha, *Coup d'œil sur la chronologie de la nation Egyptienne*, Paris 1931 ; Sir W. M. Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, 3 vols. ; *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. I, Chapter IV. (iii).

APPENDIX V.

Egyptian Religion and its Steps Towards Islam (see vii. 123, n. 1082)

This should be read along with Appendix IV in which a discussion on Egyptian chronology will be found.

God's Plan works silently but surely among all nations and all times. In the most fantastic forms of religion appear gleams of His Light of Unity, calls to Islam, i.e., man's submission of his will to the Universal Will (see C. 7-10). From that point of view the religious history of Egypt from the most ancient times to the present day is most interesting, as is indeed the religious history of any country for which we have records of thought and development. That of India touches us dearly, but it is not directly relevant in a translation and exposition of the Qur-ān. The religious history of Israel is just an earlier chapter of the history of Islam, and our doctors and commentators have written in great detail about it. Sometimes, I think, they have attached exaggerated importance to it. But none of them has paid much attention to Egypt from this point of view. Our people know very little of ancient Egypt and have shown little interest in it. It is a healthy sign that modern Egypt is showing much interest in it, and I hope that it will in time recognise in it a valuable unfoldment of religious ideas leading up to Islam.

The field of Egyptology is vast and is being extended every day by the diligent researches of archæologists and scholars. I do not propose to write an essay on Egyptian religion. But I wish to put forward a few considerations to show how God's Plan and Will worked steadily, in Egypt as elsewhere, towards greater and greater appreciation, on the part of the people, of God's true nature and the real purpose of religion. The eternal light of Unity and Islam shines in many ways, and its rays give light to the spiritual aspirations of mankind in the darkest periods. With a gifted and artistic people like the Egyptians, their religious sense was led, in spite of many rebuffs, gradually to a purer and purer conception of man's eternal destiny, until Muḥammad's Message was preached to them in the very language in which it was originally preached in Arabia. And that language, Arabic, became and is now the language of the Egyptian people themselves.

In the pre-Dynastic Egypt there must already have been a great deal of development in the religious conceptions which afterwards showed such vitality in Dynastic Egypt. The Old Kingdom, including the Pyramid Period, shows that the Egyptian mind was obsessed with the certainty of life after death. It was also impressed with ideas of grandeur, order, and precision in the universe,—ideas which found eloquent expression in the grand conceptions and mathematical symmetry and simplicity of its architecture. Its massive dignity and repose are also reflected in the faces and poses of the figures in Egyptian statuary and painting. The unending expanse and the mystery of the desert seem to have acted on the Egyptian mind like a soporific and made it less active in mundane affairs and less practical in speculation

than that of some other races of similar gifts. What mysteries are typified in the proportions of the Pyramids and their internal galleries and mysterious chambers, we shall probably never know with certainty. But a haunting sense of death and of the other world seems to oppress us in its atmosphere, as it does in the grim scenes of the "Book of the Dead." As Prof. T. E. Peet remarks (*Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. I, p. 354), "the Egyptian mind closely associated together men, gods, and the dead as merely three species of a single genus." Each of these it considered was subject to an irresistible force called *Hike* or *Heka*: hence the force of Magic, Incantations to the Dead, and Rites and Formularies in daily life.

The middle Kingdom brings us face to face with fresh ideas. We have no data with which to appraise the influence of foreign cults and foreign ideas during the period. But knowing, as we do, how Egypt acted as a magnet to the world at large and how many points of contact the Euphrates valley civilisations and the Nile valley civilisations had with each other, we may well suppose a broadening of Egyptian culture and civilisation in consequence. The Hyksos may have been Egyptianised in Egypt, but they could not have failed in their turn to contribute Syrian and Semitic ideas to Egypt. Among these were Monotheism, a patriarchal organisation of society, and an impatience of priestly, or caste domination. These must have contrasted strangely with the chaotic Pantheon of countless deities, the lash-driven slaves living huddled in the cities, and the dedicated priests and richly endowed temples which catered for the privileged few, but lived by the sweat of the brow of the unprivileged many.

The New Empire was the flowering period of Egyptian genius and requires special consideration. The crudities of the old pre-Dynastic chaotic Pantheon had been in process of attrition through the centuries. Local gods tended to be absorbed in general gods. Some sort of rationalisation and spiritualisation had been going on throughout the Dynastic period. A process of systematisation and unification was now consciously undertaken. The primitive worship of animals has gradually been transformed into a system of animal-gods, with human bodies and animal heads. The human bodies represented the anthropomorphic tendencies, while the animal heads became types of qualities. For example. Anubis, with the dog emblem, was the door-keeper, the messenger, the custodian of the dead. Apis, or Hapis, the sacred bull of Memphis, symbolised the renewal of life; he was identified with Osiris; there were great rejoicings when a new Apis (a black bull calf) was found, and great mourning and costly burial when one died. Thoth, the god of wisdom and magic, was symbolised by an ibis, that stately, mute, mysterious bird of passage in the Nile valley.

In addition to the symbolism of animals, there was the worship of the great phenomena of nature, the Nile, the giver of agricultural bounties to Egypt, and the sun, which, as the god Ra, became the supreme god in Egypt. Then there was the myth of Osiris the good, who came to the earth for the benefit of mankind, was killed by the malice of Set, the power of evil, and reigns as the judge of the dead in the lower world. His faithful wife Isis and his falcon-eyed son Horus figure in the mysteries. It is possible that the Osiris myth itself arose from a myth of the Nile or the sun.

There was gradual perception of Monotheism, a realisation that God is One and above names. But the picturesque forms, festivals, and representations remained; and as the priests of all grades enjoyed special privileged and monopolised knowledge and learning, the people remained ignorant. They were exploited and practically enslaved. It was in the midst of such conditions that Moses came. He came to rescue his own people from the bondage of Egypt, a task which he performed. But it must not be forgotten that his mission was also addressed to the king of Egypt and to the people of Egypt. Here also he sowed the seed, although he did not reap the fruit. The king, the Pharaoh, was almost looked upon as a god, and looked upon himself as a god. He had to be humbled, and he was humbled. But God's purpose is not merely to humble. It was also to lead from darkness to light. If the particular Pharaoh was too hard-hearted to respond, his descendant in the fifth or sixth generation made a public confession of the One True God, as we shall see presently. What of the people? The wise men of Egypt, who were confronted with Moses, repented of their deceit, and saw the light by the grace of God, according to the Quranic narrative. Though they were threatened and perhaps martyred, their fate must have opened the eyes of the people and prepared them for the remarkable religious revolution which we shall now proceed to describe.

The Pharaoh of the Exodus was probably Thothmes I (about 1540 B.C.). The Pharaoh Amenophis IV (about 1350 B.C.) adopted the worship of the One Supreme God as the State religion. He had been a high priest of the Sungot at Heliopolis, but had begun to look upon the multiplicity of gods in the Egyptian Pantheon as a blot on Egyptian religion. His original name had been Amen-hotep ("Ammon is satisfied") as being devoted to Ammon the great god of the State religion at Thebes. He changed his name to Akhen-Aton ("Pious to Aton") and worshipped the Supreme God under the name of Aton. He abandoned the city of Thebes as being devoted to Ammon and founded a new city near the site of what is now Tel-al-Amarna, between Thebes and Memphis, and dedicated it to Aton the Supreme God. The clay tablets discovered at Tel-al-Amarna in 1887 throw much light on the relations of Egypt with her tributaries in Syria. The alphabet on the tablets is the Cuneiform of Assyria; the language is Semitic, and closely akin to Hebrew. Unfortunately the religious revolution of Amenophis IV did not last. The city was only inhabited twenty years. His second son-in-law and successor, Tutenkh-Aton, carried out a counter-revolution. He went back from Aton to Ammon, changed his own name to Tutenkh-Amen, and restored the temples at Karnak and the cult of Ammon. The recent finds from his tombs show what exquisite skill the artists and artisans of Egypt had then attained. The pure religion remained established on the throne only for two generations, but we need not suppose that it was rooted out of the minds of the people.

The later Dynasties, XXI to XXXI, saw the decay of Egypt as a Power. The Assyrian and Persian invasions ultimately extinguished the freedom of Egypt. With the coming of Alexander the Great (332 B.C.) and the foundation of the city of Alexandria, a new era dawned on the culture of Egypt. It mingled with Greek and other thought, and became cosmopolitan in nature. Already, in the time of Herodotus, the sensitive Greek mind had been impressed with the mystery and wisdom of Egypt. It now made the soil of Egypt cosmopolitan in religion, culture, and philosophy. The

Ptolemaic dynasty held a broadly tolerant attitude, and even imported the rites of Serapis from the Black Sea and assimilated him to Apis the Bull of Memphis. The new cult of Serapis spread widely over the East, and later, when Egypt came under the Roman Empire (30 B.C.), into the very heart of that Empire. The Serapion in Alexandria, with its famous library, became for a few centuries the true intellectual centre of the world. The very unfavourable picture drawn of Egyptian religion in Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii* must be referred to the somewhat hybrid cult of Isis as practised in foreign lands rather than to Egyptian religion generally. What course real Egyptian religion took in this period we have no means of judging accurately. In the light of earlier and later events we may suppose that the steady, honest industrious Egyptian peasantry and people went on pursuing the even tenor of their career with the same mystic longing for a practical religion which was preparing them for purer forms of worship and a juster distribution of the fruits of labour.

Alexandria in the first centuries of the Christian era was resounding with the shouts of every kind of philosophy and the teaching of every kind of religious sect, from East and West, North and South, but mainly from the East, which has ever been a nursery of religious ideas. A special quarter was assigned to the Jews in the city. It became the true centre of Hellenised Judaism, and may claim Josephus among its disciples. Neo-Pythagoreanism, Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, and Manichæism found a home there. Mithraism, which was so widely spread in the Roman Empire, especially in the army, in the first three centuries A.D., was probably represented on its philosophic side in Alexandria. Its intermixture of races, creeds, philosophies, and religions, produced an atmosphere of chaos, which was not cleared until the advent of Islam.

But from a religious point of view our greatest interest in Egypt in the first seven centuries of the Christian era is in the development of Christianity itself. It is difficult to say when exactly Christianity began to displace the older Egyptian cults. But when Christianity was well-established, we find Egypt one of its most important centres. But the new Christianity which was evolved out of the ruins of Christ's simple teaching had four distinct attitudes towards organisation, speculative doctrine, asceticism and mysticism. (1) The native Egyptian or Coptic Church was contemplative, ascetic, and mystical. Monasticism became so rampant that it seriously affected the growth of population and degraded the position of women. (2) The Alexandrian school developed on Greek lines,—political, ambitious, speculative, philosophical, and liable to break up into numerous sects and heresies, each party trying to dominate and put down the others as heretical by the strong arm of the law. (3) The Bishop of Rome, when the seat of the Empire was transferred to Constantinople in 330, gradually developed political power in Italy. He inherited the Roman genius for organisation, and the invasion of the Germanic tribes gave him an opportunity not only of extending the Roman Catholic Church over the whole of Central and Western Europe, but of establishing the Church as superior to the state when the Papacy became an established political power. (4) The Orthodox Eastern Church, and all the sects which it fought in the East, tended ultimately to vanish before the advance of Islam. Had it not been for the vast Slav territories over which it obtained sway, in and around Russia and afterwards in Siberia, the Orthodox Eastern Church would have been reduced to a negligible position like the Coptic Church in Egypt. With pretensions to rule the State, it had yet become, in Kingsley's words in "*Hypatia*" the "stipendiary slave-official" of the Empire, sharing in all its effete corruption.

But we are anticipating. Before the Roman Catholic Church parted from the Orthodox Eastern Church, the united Church fought with and suppressed many so-called "heresies", some of which represented the views of primitive Christianity, and the scene of many of these doctrinal fights was in Egypt. The one that interests us most is Arianism. Arius was an Alexandrian Presbyter early in the fourth century A.D. and fought hard for the doctrine of Unity, the simple conception of the Eternal God, as against all the hair-splitting and irrational distinctions in the nature and persons of the Godhead, which finally crystallised in the doctrine of the Trinity, propounded and maintained with much personal acrimony by Athanasius. Athanasius himself was born in Alexandria and became Bishop of Alexandria. He may be counted as the father of Orthodoxy (as now understood in Christianity) and the real systematiser of the doctrine of the Trinity—"three in one and one in three." Up to the third century A.D. the Unitarians had been in the majority in the Christian Church, though subtle metaphysicians had started disputes as to the meaning of "God becoming man," the Logos or the Word, the Power of God, whether the Father and the Son were of the same substance or of similar substance, whether the Son could be said to have been created by the Father, and numerous questions of that kind. They do not interest us now, but they rent the Christian world into many jarring sects until the mission of our Holy Apostle dissipated the mists and re-established the doctrine of Unity on a firm and rational basis.

As I have said, the Christian Churches in the East, as well as the Germanic nations which came later into the fold, adhered to Unity although not in the pure form which was made clear in the Holy Qur-ān. The issue was joined between Arius and Athanasius, and the first General Council of the Christian Church, that of Nicæa (in Bithynia) in 325, decided against Arius and unitarianism. The controversy, however, still continued to rage until 381, when the Council of Constantinople, called by the Emperor Theodosius the Great, confirmed the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity and declared it to be the only Orthodox one. Though controversies, protests, and persecutions continued long afterwards, we may take that date as the date of the fall of Christianity. Even in Western Christianity, as late as 496, Clovis the Frankish king was the only Christian sovereign sophisticated enough to follow the subtle doctrine of the Trinity. The others were brought into line by political power later.

The Christian creed became narrower and narrower, less and less rational, more and more inclined to use earthly weapons to suppress the eternal truth of God. In 415 the Jews were expelled from Alexandria. In the same year and in the same city the beautiful, modest, eloquent philosopher and mathematician, Hypatia, was murdered,—an outrage against both rationalism and the intellectual and religious position of woman in human society. The murder was a particularly brutal one. She was dragged from her chariot in the streets, stripped naked, and suffered a lingering death in a Christian Church. Her body was then cut to pieces and burned. The worst feature of the crime was the complicity of the Patriarch of Alexandria, who was not only the chief religious dignitary of the Orthodox Church in Egypt but the *de facto* repository of political power. Meanwhile the native Christian community—the Coptic Church,—which had all along clung to the Monophysite doctrine, a corrupt form of Unitarianism, was out of the pale, and its members were held down as a depressed class by their Orthodox brethren. The latter also, basking in official sunshine, collected

power and property into their own hands. As Kingsley remarks in *Hypatia*, the Egyptian Church "ended as a mere chaos of idolatrous sects, persecuting each other for metaphysical propositions, which, true or false, were equally heretical in their mouths because they used them as watchwords for division." The social conditions produced an amount of discontent, for which the redress came only with the advent of Islam.

It was for this reason that the Copts and the inhabitants of Egypt generally welcomed the forces of Islam under 'Amr as deliverers in 639 A.D. The power was taken over by the victorious army of Islam from Cyrus (called Muqauqas in Arabic through the Coptic), the Patriarch of Alexandria, but it was used by the army of deliverance to enlarge the liberties of the Egyptians, to admit them into the universal brotherhood of Islam, and to improve the resources of the country for the benefit of the people. Except a negligible remnant of conservatives the Egyptians as a nation accepted the religion, the language, and the institutions of the Arabs and embarked on a new course of history, which it is unnecessary to follow further in this note.

It should be remarked, however, that what happened in Egypt happened generally in western Asia. The jarring, sectarian, irrational religions gave place before the triumphant religion of Unity and Brotherhood, and the Byzantine Empire receded and receded until it was swept out of existence. The feeble efforts made by the Emperor Leo the Isaurian in 726-731 to restrict the use of images were a reflection of the puritanical zeal of Islam. But they did not succeed in the area of his authority, and they completely alienated the Papacy from the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Bishop of Rome had been consolidating his power, and in the person of Gregory I (590-604) had already assumed the control of Italy and was seeking the aid and support of the Barbarian invaders who eventually became the pillars of the Papacy. The final and open rupture between the Orthodox Eastern Church and the Roman Catholic Church took place in 1054. But the earlier dates are remarkable. After the birth of the Holy Apostle of Islam the disruption of the Orthodox Christian Church (which had now become an anachronism) began. When Islam was making its triumphant march in the 8th century after Christ, the original (Greek) Church began to take some steps to put its own house in order. But it had lost its mission, and the new Islamic people took its place. The Western Church has since worked on definitely new lines, and its offshoots among the Protestant Churches have, consciously or unconsciously, been influenced by the broad principles of Islam. What the course of future religion may be and how God will unfold His All-Wise Plan it is not given to us mortals to know. In the Islamic Brotherhood many changes have taken place and are taking place. Egypt, in spite of her many vicissitudes in the Islamic period, is in the intellectual forefront among the Arabic-speaking nations of Islam. We pray that her people may be guided, through their educational, cultural, and religious channels, to work with a new spirit for the progress of Islam and the glory of God.

References : Those given for Appendix IV ; and in addition : Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, *Gods of the Egyptians* ; and his latest book *From Fetish to God in Ancient Egypt* (Oxford 1934) ; Budge, *Book of the Dead* ; A. W. Shorter, *Introduction to Egyptian Religion* (1931) ; Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 7 vols., is an elaborate detailed German account of how Christian Dogma grew up and may be read in an English translation : a handier book is R. W. Mackay, *Rise and Progress of Christianity* (1854) ; C. Kingsley's novel *Hypatia* gives a good picture of social and religious conditions in Christian Egypt in the fifth century. On the identity of al-Muqauqas (Pkauchios) with Cyrus, see Dr. A. J. Butler's *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, (Oxford 1902), pp. 508-562.

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA VIII (*Anfāl*)

In the previous Introductions to the Sūras we have shown how each Sūra is a step or gradation in the teaching of the Qur-ān. The first seven Sūras, comprising a little less than one-third of the Qur-ān, form a gradation, sketching the early spiritual history of man and leading up to the formation of the new Ummat or Community of the Holy Apostle. Now we begin another gradation, consolidating that Ummat and directing us as to various phases in our new collective life.

In this chapter we have the lessons of the Battle of Badr enforced in their larger aspects: (1) the question of war booty; (2) the true virtues necessary for fighting the good fight; (3) victory against odds; (4) clemency and consideration for one's own and for others in the hour of victory.

As regards booty taken in battle, the first point to note is that that should never be our aim in war. It is only an adventitious circumstance, a sort of windfall. Secondly, no soldier or troop has any inherent right to it. A righteous war is a community affair, and any accessions resulting from it belong to God, or the community or Cause. Thirdly, certain equitable principles of division should be laid down to check human greed and selfishness. A fifth share goes to the Commander, and he can use it at his discretion; for his own expenses, and for the relief of the poor and suffering, and the orphans and widows (viii. 41). The remainder was divided, according to the Prophet's practice, not only among those who were actually in the fight physically, but all who were in the enterprise, young and old, provided they loyally did some duty assigned to them. Fourthly, there should be no disputes, as they interfere with internal discipline and harmony.

These principles are followed in the best modern practice of civilised nations. All acquisition of war belong absolutely to the Sovereign as representing the commonwealth. In the distribution of booty not only the actual captors but also the "joint captors" and the "constructive captors" share. See Sir R. Phillimore's *International Law* (1885), vol. 3, pp. 209-10, 221-24.

As regards the military virtues, which are the types of virtues throughout life, we are shown by an analysis of the incidents of Badr how, against the greatest odds, God's help will give the victory if men are fighting not for themselves but for the sacred Cause of God. And directions are given for the treatment of prisoners and for maintaining the solidarity of the Muslim community.

The date of this Sūra is shortly after the battle of Badr, which was fought on Friday, the 17th of *Ramadhān* in the second year of the *Hijra*. A short account of the battle is given in n. 352 to iii. 13.

Summary.—All booty is really at the disposal of God's Apostle under directions from God. Men of faith accept and obey these directions with cheerfulness. Victory and the prize of victory come from God, as was proved at Badr (viii. 1-19, C. 89).

Obedience and intelligent discipline, zeal, faith, and gratitude to God, are the true passports to success and protection from the assaults of evil. Evil will be piled up with evil and destroyed (viii. 20-37, and C. 90).

The battle of Badr was a testing time, and showed how virtue and valour can conquer against odds. Steadfastness and obedience; faith, courage, and fearlessness; due preparation and free expenditure of resources and energy;—these are expected from you by God, and His help is all sufficient (viii. 38-64, and C. 91).

Even tenfold odds against you do not count if you are fighting for truth and faith against enemies of truth and faith; but remember clemency and consideration in the hour of victory (viii. 65-75, and C. 92).

C. 89.—Fight the good fight, but dispute not

(viii. 1-19.) About the prize: that is for God

To give. Men of faith act and obey.

'Tis nobler to fight for Truth

Than to seek worldly gain.

To the pure in faith God will give

The mind and the resources to conquer.

They but fight, with no thought

Of ever turning back: the victory

Should be ascribed to God, not men.

Sūra VIII.

Anfal, or the Spoils of War.

In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

1. They ask thee¹¹⁷⁸ concerning
(Things taken as) spoils of war.
Say : "(Such) spoils are
At the disposal of God¹¹⁷⁹
And the Apostle : so fear
God, and keep straight
The relations between yourselves :
Obey God and His Apostle,
If ye do believe."

2. For, Believers are those
Who, when God is mentioned,
Feel a tremor in their hearts,
And when they hear
His Signs rehearsed, find
Their faith strengthened,
And put (all) their trust
In their Lord ;

3. Who establish regular prayers
And spend (freely) out of
The gifts We have given
Them for sustenance : ¹¹⁸⁰

4. Such in truth are the Believers :
They have grades of dignity
With their Lord, and forgiveness,
And generous sustenance :



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

۱- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ
قُلِ الْأَنْفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ
وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

۲- إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ
وَجِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا
وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝

۳- الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ
وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ۝

۴- أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتُ
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ۝

1178. The occasion was the question of the division of the booty after the battle of Badr. See Introduction to this Sūra.

1179. Booty taken in a lawful and just war does not belong to any individual. If he fought for such accessory rewards, he fought from wrong motives. It belongs to the Cause, in this case the Cause of God, as administered by His Apostle. Any portion given out to individuals are accessory gifts, windfalls from the bounty of the Commander. The chief thing is to remain staunch to the Cause of God, and have no differences among those who stand for the Cause. Our internal relations must be kept straight: they must not be disturbed by cupidity or worldly considerations of gain, for any windfalls of this kind should be outside our calculations.

1180. *Sustenance*: again in both the literal and the metaphorical sense. The object is to warn off from the love of booty and worldly wealth. Why do we want these? To all true Believers God gives generous sustenance in any case, in both senses, but especially in the spiritual sense, for it is coupled with forgiveness and grades of dignity before God, in the next verse.

5. Just as ¹¹⁸¹ thy Lord ordered thee
Out of thy house in truth,
Even though a party among
The Believers disliked it,

هـ- كَمَا أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَأَنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَرِهُونَ ۝

6. Disputing with thee concerning
The truth after it was made
Manifest, as if they were
Being driven to death
And they (actually) saw it. ¹¹⁸²

هـ- يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَ مَا
تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ
وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ ۝

7. Behold ! God promised you
One of the two (enemy) parties, ¹¹⁸³
That it should be yours :
Ye wished that the one
Unarmed should be yours,
But God willed
To justify the Truth
According to His words,
And to cut off the roots
Of the Unbelievers ;—

هـ- وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ
أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتُؤَدُّونَ أَنْ غَيْرُ ذَاتِ
الشُّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ
وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَيِّقَ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَتِهِ
وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

8. That He might justify Truth
And prove Falsehood false,
Distasteful though it be
To those in guilt.

هـ- لِيُخَيِّقَ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ
وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ۝

1181. *Just as*: the comparison takes us back to the first clause in verse 4: "such in truth are the Believers"—just as thy Lord also is just and true in ordering thee out to fight against heavy odds, when the alternative was to fight against the unarmed caravan which would have given thee abundant booty almost without a fight. To appreciate the full meaning, remember that the word *haqq*, translated "truth," means also "right," "just," "what is becoming." The true Believers believe in truth and do right in obedience to God's command. So God also, in asking them to fight against odds, is not asking them to rush to destruction, but is providing them with an opportunity of vindicating the truth in scorn of worldly advantage. And He made good His promise by giving them victory.

1182. In verse 6 we have again the word "truth": some of the Believers disputed concerning "the truth": they did not feel sure that the course recommended was the true and right course. They thought it would be certain destruction: they saw death almost staring them in the face.

1183. Just before Badr there were two alternatives before the Muslims in Medina, to save themselves from being overwhelmed by the Meccan Quraish with all their resources from the rich Syrian trade. One, which had least danger for the time being, and also promised much booty, was to fall upon the Quraish caravan returning from Syria to Mecca richly laden, and led by Abū Sufyan with only 40 men unarmed. From a worldly point of view this was the safest and most lucrative course. The other alternative, which was actually adopted on the recommendation of the Apostle by the guidance of God, was to leave the booty alone and march out boldly against the well-armed and well-equipped Quraish army of 1,000 men coming from Mecca. The Muslims had no more than 300 men, ill-armed, to oppose to this force. But if they could defeat it, it would shake the selfish autocracy which was in possession of Mecca. By God's help they won a splendid victory, and the standard of Truth was established, never to be lowered again.

9. Remember ye implored
The assistance of your Lord,
And He answered you :
" I will assist you
With a thousand of the angels,
Ranks on ranks."¹¹⁸⁴

٩- اِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ
فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ اِنِّى مُبِدِّكُمْ
بِالْفِ مِنْ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرَدِّفَيْنِ ۝

10. God made it but a message
Of hope, and an assurance
To your hearts : (in any case)¹¹⁸⁵
There is no help
Except from God :
And God is Exalted in Power,
Wise.

١٠- وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللهُ اِلَّا بُشْرٰى وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ
بِهٖ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَمَا النَّصْرُ اِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ
اللهِ اِنَّ اللهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

SECTION 2.

11. Remember He covered you
With a sort of drowsiness¹¹⁸⁶
To give you calm as from
Himself, and he caused
Rain to descend on you¹¹⁸⁷
From heaven, to clean you
Therewith, to remove from you
The stain of Satan,¹¹⁸⁸
To strengthen your hearts,
And to plant your feet
Firmly therewith.

١١- اِذْ يُغَشِّيكُمُ النُّعَاسَ اَمْنَةً مِنْهُ
وَيُنْزِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَآءً
لِّيُطَهِّرَكُم بِهِ
وَيُزِيلَ هَبَ عَنْكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطٰنِ
وَلِيُثَبِّطَ عَلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ
وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الْاَقْدَامَ ۝

12. Remember thy Lord inspired
The angels (with the message) :
" I am with you : give
Firmness to the Believers :

١٢- اِذْ يُوحِى رَبُّكَ اِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ
اِنِّى مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۝

1184. Cf. iii. 123, 125, 126 The number of angels, a thousand at Badr and three thousand and five thousand at Uhud, is probably not to be taken literally, but to express a strength at least equal to that of the enemy.

1185. All help comes ultimately from God. In special cases it may take special forms to put heart into us, and to fit in with our feelings and our psychology.

1186 Cf. iii. 154 for Uhud Calm (presence of mind) is essential in battle and in all posts of danger. If the mind is too much in a state of excitement, it cannot carry out a well-considered or well-concerted plan. The spirit of calm confidence on the part of the Muslims won against the blustering violence of the Quraish.


1187. The rain was welcome for many reasons : (1) Water was scarce both for drinking and ablutions ; (2) the Muslim band, without baggage or equipment or comforts, found that their thirst aggravated their fatigue ; (3) the sand was loose, and the rain consolidated it and enabled them " to plant their feet firmly."

1188. " Stain of Satan " : both literally and figuratively. Dirt is physically a symbol of evil, and the Muslims were particular about ablutions before prayer. But the rain also refreshed their spirits and removed any lurking doubts in their minds (suggestions of the Evil One) that victory might be impossible in such adverse circumstances.

I will instil terror
Into the hearts of the Unbelievers :
Smite ye above their necks
And smite all their
Finger-tips off them." 1189

13. This because they contended
Against God and His Apostle :
If any contend against God,
And His Apostle, God
Is strict in punishment.

14. Thus (will it be said) : "Taste ye
Then of the (punishment) :
For those who resist God,
Is the penalty of the Fire."

15.  ye who believe !
When ye meet
The Unbelievers
In hostile array, 1190
Never turn your backs
To them.

16. If any do turn his back
To them on such a day—
Unless it be in a stratagem
Of war, or to retreat
To a troop (of his own)—
He draws on himself
The wrath of God,
And his abode is Hell,—
An evil refuge (indeed) !

17. It is not ye who
Slew them ; it was God :

سَيَلْقَىٰ فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ
فَأَضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ
وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ ۝

۱۳- ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
فَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

۱۴- ذَلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ
وَأَنَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۝

۱۵- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا زَحَفًا
فَلَا تُولُوهُمْ الْأَدْبَارَ ۝

۱۶- وَمَنْ يُولِهِمْ يُؤْمِدْ دُبْرَهُ
إِلَّا مُتَحَرِّقًا لِقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزًا إِلَىٰ فِتْنَةٍ
فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَمَا أُولُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ
وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ۝

۱۷- قُلْ لَّمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ

1189. The vulnerable parts of an armed man are above the neck. A blow on the neck, face, or head, finishes him off. If he has armour it is difficult to get at his heart. But if his hands are put out of action, he is unable to wield his sword or lance or other weapon, and easily becomes a prisoner."

1190. The laws of spiritual fight are exactly similar to those enforced by military virtue and discipline. Meet your enemy fairly and squarely, not rashly, but after due preparation. *Zahfan* in the text (*meeting in hostile array*) implies a slow and well-planned proceeding towards a hostile army. When once in combat, carry it through; there is no room for second thoughts. Death or victory should be the motto of every soldier; it may be death for himself individually, but if he has faith, there is triumph in either case for his cause. Two exceptions are recognised; (1) *reculer pour mieux sauter*, to go back in order to jump forward; or to deceive the enemy by a feint; (2) if an individual or body is, by the chances of battle, isolated from his own force, he can fall back on his force in order to fight the battle. There is no virtue in mere single-handedness. Each individual must use his life and his resources to the best advantage for the common cause.

When thou threwest (a handful¹¹⁹¹
Of dust) it was not
Thy act, but God's :
In order that He might
Test the Believers
By a gracious trial¹¹⁹²
From Himself : for God
Is He Who heareth
And knoweth (all things).

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ
وَلِيُبَيِّنَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءٌ حَسَنًا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

18. That, and also because
God is He Who makes feeble
The plans and stratagems
Of the Unbelievers.

۱۸- ذَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ
مُوهِنُ كَيْدِ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

19. (O Unbelievers!) if ye prayed
For victory and judgment,¹¹⁹³
Now hath the judgment
Come to you : if ye desist
(From wrong), it will be
Best for you : if ye return
(To the attack) so shall We.
Not the least good
Will your forces be to you
Even if they were multiplied :
For verily God
Is with those who believe !

۱۹- إِنْ تَسْتَغِيثُوا فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الْفَتْحُ
وَإِنْ تَنْتَهُوا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
وَإِنْ تَعُودُوا نَعُدْ
وَلَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْئًا
وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝


C. 90.—Be ready to obey God's call, and to hold
(viii. 20-37.) All else as naught : He will give you
The light, turn away all evil from you,
And forgive you your sins and shortcomings.
Ever keep in remembrance His mercies and grace.
The godless may try to keep men
From God, but they will not thrive :
They will be hurled together to destruction.

1191. When the battle began, the Holy Apostle prayed, and threw a handful of dust or sand at the enemy, symbolical of their rushing blindly to their fate. This had a great psychological effect. Every act in the battle is ascribed to God, as it was in His cause, and it was not undertaken except by His command.

1192. Numerically the odds against the Muslims were three to one. In other ways they were at a disadvantage ; of arms and equipment they had but little, while the enemy were well-found ; they were inexperienced, while the Quraish had brought their foremost warriors. In all this there was a test, but the test was accompanied by gracious favours of countless value : their Commander was one in whom they had perfect faith, and for whom they were ready to lay down their lives ; the rain refreshed them ; their spirit was unshaken ; and they were fighting in God's cause. Thus the trial or test became itself a blessing.

1193. *Fatah*=victory, decision, judgment. The Quraish in Mecca had prayed for victory ; they were confident that their superior numbers, equipment, and experience would be decisive. With a play on the word, they are told that the decision had come, and the victory—but not in the sense they had hoped for !

SECTION 3.

20.  ye who believe !
Obey God and His Apostle,
And turn not away from him
When ye hear (him speak).
21. Nor be like those who say,
"We hear," but listen not : ¹¹⁹⁴
22. For the worst of beasts
In the sight of God
Are the deaf and the dumb,—¹¹⁹⁵
• Those who understand not.
23. If God had found in them
Any good, He would indeed
Have made them listen :
(As it is), if He had made them
Listen, they would but have
Turned back and declined (faith).
24. O ye who believe !
Give your response to God
And His Apostle, when He
Calleth you to that which
Will give you life ; ¹¹⁹⁶
And know that God
Cometh in between a man ¹¹⁹⁷
And his heart, and that
It is He to Whom
Ye shall (all) be gathered.

۲۰- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا أَعْنَافَهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ ۝

۲۱- وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَ
هُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ۝

۲۲- إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ
الْبَكْمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ۝

۲۳- وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ
خَيْرًا لَأَسْمَعَهُمْ
وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ۝

۲۴- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ
إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ
وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ۝

1194. Cf. ii. 93.

1195. Cf. ii. 18.

1196. There are two points to note. (1) Note that after God and His Apostle are mentioned, the pronoun and verb in the next clause are singular ; everything that God's Apostle put forward as an injunction came by inspiration from God : the Apostle made his will coincide completely with God's will. (2) We are asked actively to give our response in deed and life to the call of duty and conscience, for that call leads to real life, the life eternal, even though it may apparently mean in this world the loss of things that make life dear or the loss of life itself. If we refer this to Jihād, i.e., fighting in and for the Cause, both literally and metaphorically, the meaning becomes quite clear.

1197. If the human heart is refractory and refuses to obey the call of God, that is not the end of the matter. God has to be reckoned with. 'The refusal may be because there was some pet human scheme which the heart of man was not willing to give up for God's Cause. Will that scheme come to function by refusing to serve the higher Cause? By no means. Man proposes, but God disposes. If the scheme or motive was perfectly secret from men, it was not secret from God. The heart is the innermost seat of man's affections and desires ; but between this seat and man himself is the presence of the Omnipresent.

25. And fear tumult or oppression,¹¹⁹⁸
Which affecteth not in particular
(Only) those of you who do wrong :
And know that God
Is strict in punishment.

٢٥- وَأَتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً
لَا تُضِيبُنَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً
وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ○

26. Call to mind when ye
Were a small (band),
Despised through the land,
And afraid that men might
Despoil and kidnap you ;¹¹⁹⁹
But He provided a safe asylum
For you, strengthened you
With His aid, and gave you
Good things for sustenance :
That ye might be grateful.

٢٦- وَإِذْ كُنْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
مُستَضْعَفُونَ لِي الْأَرْضِ
مُتَخَفُونَ أَنْ يُتَخَطَّفَكُمُ النَّاسُ
فَأَوَّكَكُمُ وَيَدَكُم بِنُصْرِهِ
وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ الظِّبْيَةِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

27. ○ ye that believe !
Betray not the trust
Of God and the Apostle,
Nor misappropriate knowingly
Things entrusted to you.¹²⁰⁰

٢٧- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ
وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمْنَكُمْ
وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ○

28. And know ye
That your possessions

٢٨- وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ

1198. *Fitnat* has many meanings: (1) the root meaning is trial or temptation, as in ii. 102 and viii. 28; (2) an analogous meaning is trial or punishment, as in v. 74; (3) tumult or oppression, as in ii. 193; and here; and in viii. 39; (4) there is here (viii. 25) the further shade of meaning suggested: discord, sedition, civil war.

This warning against internal discord or tumult was very necessary in the Civil Wars of early Islam, and was never more necessary than it is now. For it affects innocent and guilty alike.

1199. On the immediate occasion the Muslims were reminded that they were a small band in Mecca; despised and rejected; living in a state of insecurity for their persons, their lives, their property, and those of their dependants; persecuted and exiled and how by the grace of God they found a safe asylum in Medina, how they found friends and helpers, how their many needs were cared for, and how at length they gathered strength and numbers enough to defeat the forces of godlessness, injustice, and oppression.

But for every individual, in some form or other, the lesson applies. His spiritual life begins humbly; he is despised and laughed at, perhaps persecuted and shut out from ordinary privileges open to all; but God gives him strength; friends spring up for him; and he is sustained until his highest spiritual desires are gradually fulfilled.

1200. Trusts may be of various kinds: (1) property, goods, credit, etc.; (2) plans, confidences, secrets, etc.; (3) knowledge, talents, opportunities, etc. which we are expected to use for our fellow-men. Men may betray the trust of God and His Apostle by misusing property, or abusing the confidence reposed in them, or the knowledge or talents given to them. On that special occasion, when the plans for the protection of God's worshippers against annihilation were of special importance, the Apostle's trust and confidence had to be guarded with special care. Occasions for scrupulously respecting the trust and confidence of our fellow-men occur every day in our life, and few of us can claim perfection in this respect. Hence the special distinction of the man of God, who earned the title of *Al-Amin*, the one who was true to every trust reposed in him.

And your progeny
Are but a trial; ¹²⁰¹
And that it is God
With whom lies
Your highest reward.

SECTION 4.

29. **O** ye who believe !
If ye fear God,
He will grant you a Criterion¹²⁰²
(To judge between right and wrong)
Remove from you (all) evil
(That may afflict) you,
And forgive you :
For God is the Lord
Of grace unbounded.
30. **R**emember how the Unbelievers
Plotted against thee, to keep
Thee in bonds, or slay thee,
Or get thee out (of thy home). ¹²⁰³
They plot and plan,
And God too plans,
But the best of planners ^{1203 A}
Is God.
31. **W**hen Our Signs are rehearsed
To them, they say : " We
Have heard this (before) :
If we wished, we could
Say (words) like these :
These are nothing
But tales of the ancients." ¹²⁰⁴

وَأُولَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَ أَجْرٍ عَظِيمٍ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا
وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

وَأِذْ يَنْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ
وَيَنْكُرُونَ وَيَكْمُرُ اللَّهُ
وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ

وَأِذْ اتْتَلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا قَالُوا قَدْ
سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَذَا
إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا آسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

1201 A big family—many sons—was considered a source of power and strength. iii 10, 116. So in English, a man with many children is said to have his "quiver full". Cf Psalms, cxxviii 4-5. "As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are the children of thy youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate." So with property and possessions they add to a man's dignity, power, and influence. But both possessions and a large family are a temptation and a trial. They may turn out to be a source of spiritual downfall, if they are mishandled, or if the love of them excludes the love of God.

1202 Cf ii 53 and ii 185. The battle of Badr is called the *Furqān* in Muslim theology, because it was the first trial of strength by battle, in Islam between the powers of good and evil. Evil was defeated, and those who had real faith were tested and sorted out from those who had not faith enough to follow the banner of Faith. See also viii 41 and n 1210.

1203 The plots against Mustafā in Mecca aimed at three things. They were not only foiled, but God's wonderful working turned the tables, and brought good out of evil in each case. (1) They tried to hold the Apostle in subjection in Mecca by putting pressure on his uncles, relatives, and friends. But the more they persecuted, the more the little Muslim community grew in faith and numbers. (2) They tried to injure or slay him. But the wonderful example of his humility, perseverance, and fearlessness furthered the cause of Islam. (3) They tried to get him and his out of their homes. But they found a new home in Medina, from which they eventually reconquered not only Mecca but Arabia and the world.

1203 A Cf iii 54.

1204. Cf. vi. 25.

32. Remember how they said :

"O God ! if this is indeed
The Truth from Thee,
Rain down on us a shower
Of stones from the sky,
Or send us a grievous Penalty." 1205

۳۲- وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ
الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حَجَارَةً
مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ اثْبِتْنَا بِعَذَابٍ إِلَيْنَا ۝

33. But God was not going
To send them a Penalty
Whilst thou wast amongst them ;
Nor was He going to send it
Whilst they could ask for pardon.

۳۳- وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ
وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ
وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ۝

34. But what plea have they
That God should not punish
Them, when they keep out
(Men) from the Sacred Mosque—
And they are not its guardians ?
No men can be its guardians
Except the righteous ; but most
Of them do not understand.

۳۴- وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُمْ
يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا
كَانُوا أَوْلِيَاءَهُ إِنْ أَوْلِيَائِهِ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقُونَ
وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

35. Their prayer at the House
(Of God) is nothing but
Whistling and clapping of hands :
(Its only answer can be),
"Taste ye the Penalty
Because ye blasphemed."

۳۵- وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ
إِلَّا مُمَاكَةً وَتَضْدِيقًا
فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ۝

36. The Unbelievers spend their
wealth
To hinder (men) from the path
Of God, and so will they
Continue to spend ; but
In the end they will have
(Only) regrets and sighs ;

۳۶- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ
لِيَصُدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
فَسَيُنْفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً

1205. This was actually a challenge thrown out by the Infidels in Mecca, not seriously but as a taunt. The answer is in the two following verses. God punishes in His own good time, not according to the foolish and frivolous taunts of the Unbelievers. While the Holy Apostle was with them, he—the Mercy of the Worlds—conferred a certain amount of immunity to them. There were also other Muslims, just men who asked for forgiveness. And God keeps the door of repentance and forgiveness open to all as long as they make it possible. But let them not be puffed up with pride, or think that they have lasting immunity. What became of Abū Jahl ? He and some of his greatest warriors were slain at Badr. The little autocratic clique that prevented Muslims from access to the Sacred Mosque had their Nemesis not long afterwards. They pretended to be its guardians. But were they ? Could they be ? Only the righteous could be true guardians to God's places of worship, and particularly to the Central House of the Ka'ba. It was to be a place of pure worship, while their idolatrous worship was mere mummery,—whistling and clapping of hands. All false worship advertises itself by noise and unseemly riot ; it is said that the Pagans used to go naked round the Ka'ba.

At length they will be overcome :
And the Unbelievers will be
Gathered together to Hell ;—

37. In order that God may separate¹²⁰⁶
The impure from the pure,
Put the impure, one on another,
Heap them together, and cast them
Into Hell. They will be
The ones to have lost.

ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ هُ
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُخْشَرُونَ ٣٧
لِيُفَرِّقَ اللَّهُ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ
الْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكَبُهُ جَمِيعًا
فَيَجْعَلُهُ فِي جَهَنَّمَ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُونَ ٣٨

C. 91.—The battle of Badr brought to an issue
(viii. 38-64.) The fight between Truth and Unbelief.

It was the Day of Differentiation.
Not for spoils was it won, nor by numbers ;
But by courage and planning, union of wills,
And pooling of strength and resources,—
Above all by the help of God,
Whose help is ever all-sufficient.

SECTION 5.

38. Say to the Unbelievers,
If (now) they desist (from Unbelief),
Their past would be forgiven them ;
But if they persist, the punishment
Of those before them is already
(A matter of warning for them).

٣٨ قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ
لَهُمْ مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ وَإِنْ يَعُودُوا فَقَدْ
مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ٣٩

39. And fight them on
Until there is no more
Tumult or oppression,
And there prevail
Justice and faith in God¹²⁰⁷
Altogether and everywhere ;
But if they cease, verily God
Doth see all that they do.¹²⁰⁸

٣٩ وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا يَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ
وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ
فَإِنْ ائْتَمَرُوا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ٤٠

40. If they refuse, be sure
That God is your Protector—
9 The Best to protect
30 And the Best to help.

٤٠ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مُوَلِّكُمْ
نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ ٤١

1206. It is only when matters are brought to an issue that evil is separated distinctly from the good. Then evil consorts with evil, and good with good. The evil will be piled into a heap. When the cup is full, the punishment will come. There will be no mistake about it. The good should not be discouraged, because in fighting against them, all forces of evil join together and pool their resources together. The more they do so, the easier is the final arbitrament. It is all in God's Plan.

1207. Cf. ii. 193 and n.

1208. If they cease from fighting and from the persecution of truth, God judges them by their actions and their motives, and would not wish that they should be harassed with further hostility. But if they refuse all terms, the righteous have nothing to fear ; God will help and protect them.

41. And know that out of
All the booty that ye
May acquire (in war),
A fifth share is assigned ¹²⁰⁹
To God,—and to the Apostle,
And to near relatives,
Orphans, the needy,
And the wayfarer,—
If ye do believe in God
And in the revelation
We sent down to Our Servant
On the Day of Testing,—¹²¹⁰
The Day of the meeting
Of the two forces.
For God hath power
Over all things. ¹²¹¹

42. Remember ye were
On the hither side
Of the valley, and they
On the farther side,
And the caravan ¹²¹²
On lower ground than ye.
Even if ye had made
A mutual appointment
To meet, ye would certainly
Have failed in the appointment : ¹²¹³

٤١- وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ
وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ
وَمَا أُنْزِلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدٍ نَأْيُومَ الْفُرْقَانِ
يَوْمَ التَّلَقَّى الْجَمْعَيْنِ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٥

٤٢- إِذْ أَنتُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ الدُّنْيَا
وَهُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ الْقُصْوَىٰ
وَالرَّكْبُ أَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ
وَلَوْ تَوَاعَدْتُمْ
لَاخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِي الْمِيعَادِ ٥

1209. The rule is that a fifth share is set apart for the Imām (the Commander) and the rest is divided among the forces. The fifth share reserved is expressed to be for God and the Apostle, and for charitable purposes for those to whom charity is due. Ultimately everything is at the disposal of God and His Apostle: viii. 1; but four-fifths are divided, and only one-fifth is retained for the special purposes. The Imām has discretion as to the mode of division. In the Apostle's life-time a certain portion was assigned to the Apostle and his near relatives.

1210. *Testing: Furqān*: Criterion between right and wrong, decision between the forces of faith and unbelief. The battle of Badr is called by this name. See viii. 29 and n. 1202.

1211. God's power is shown in the events detailed in the three verses following (vv. 42-44), leading to the complete victory of the Muslims over the pagan Quraish.

1212. The little Islamic force from Medina went out to meet the big Meccan army, and they met on the two sides of a valley at Badr, while the Quraish caravan was on lower ground towards the sea, about 3 miles from Badr.

1213. They were all at cross purposes. The caravan was making for Mecca, but scarcely thought it could get there. The Quraish force was trying to save the caravan and then annihilate the Muslims. The Muslims had decided to let the caravan alone but attack the Quraish army from Mecca, which they thought was going to be small, but which turned out to be big, more than three times their number. Yet the two forces met, precisely at the spot and at the time when a decisive battle should take place and the Muslims dispose of the pretensions of the Meccans. If they had carefully planned mutual appointment, they could not have carried it out more precisely.


On the Muslim side the few martyrs knew that the victory was theirs and those who survived the battle enjoyed the fruits of the victory. On the pagan side, both those who died and those who lived knew fully the issue joined. Even psychologically both sides went in with full determination to decide the issue.

But (thus ye met),
That God might accomplish
A matter already enacted ;
That those who died might
Die after a clear Sign
(Had been given), and those who
lived
Might live after a Clear Sign
(Had been given). And verily
God is He who heareth
And knoweth (all things).

43. Remember in thy dream
God showed them to thee
As few : if He had shown
Them to thee as many,
Ye would surely have been
Discouraged, and ye would
Surely have disputed
In (your) decision : but God
Saved (you) : for He knoweth
Well the (secrets) of (all) hearts.

44. And remember when ye met,
He showed them to you
As few in your eyes,
And He made you appear
As contemptible in their eyes : ¹²¹⁴
That God might accomplish
A matter already enacted.
For to God do all questions
Go back (for decision).

SECTION 6.

45.  ye who believe !
When ye meet a force,
Be firm, and call God
In remembrance much (and often) ;
That ye may prosper :

46. And obey God and His Apostle ;
And fall into no disputes,

وَلَكِنْ لِّيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا
كَانَ مَفْعُولًا
لِيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ
وَيُحْيِيَ مَنْ حَيَّ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَسَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

٢٣- إِذْ يُرِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَنَامِكُمْ قَلِيلًا
وَلَوْ أَرَاكُمْ كَثِيرًا لَفَشَلْتُمْ
وَلَتَتَّاعَتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ
وَلَكِنْ اللَّهُ سَلَمٌ
إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ

٢٣- وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ
إِذْ التَقَيْتُمْ فِي آعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلًا
وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِي آعْيُنِهِمْ
لِيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا
وَرَأَى اللَّهُ تَرْجِعَ الْأُمُورَ

٢٥- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً
فَانْبِئُوا وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

٢٦- وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا

1214. The Muslim army, though they knew their worldly disadvantage, did not realise the full odds against them. The Meccans came exulting in any case, and they despised the contemptible little force opposed to them. Even though they thought the Muslim force was twice as great as it was (iii. 13), still that number was contemptible, when taken with its poor equipment. Both these psychological mistakes subverted the main Plan, which was to bring the matter to a decisive issue, whether the Pagans of Mecca were to continue their arrogant oppression, or the religion of God was to be established in freedom and honour.

Lest ye lose heart
And your power depart ;
And be patient and persevering :
For God is with those
Who patiently persevere : ¹²¹⁵

47. And be not like those
Who started from their homes
Insolently and to be seen of men,
And to hinder (men)
From the path of God : ¹²¹⁶
For God compasseth round about
All that they do.

48. Remember Satan made
Their (sinful) acts seem
Alluring to them, and said :
" No one among men
Can overcome you this day,
While I am near to you " :
But when the two forces
Came in sight of each other,
He turned on his heels,
And said : " Lo ! I am clear
Of you ; lo ! I see
What ye see not ;
Lo ! I fear God ; for God
Is Strict in punishment." ¹²¹⁷

SECTION 7.

49. **Behold!** the Hypocrites say, and ^{those}
In whose hearts is a disease : ¹²¹⁸
" These people,—their religion
Has misled them." But
If any trust in God, behold !
God is Exalted in might, Wise.

فَتَقَشَّلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَ
أَصْبِرُوا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝

٣٧- وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا
مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بَطْرًا وَرِئَاءَ النَّاسِ
وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ۝

٣٨- وَإِذْ زَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ
وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ
وَإِنِّي بَجَانِّ لَكُمْ فَلَتَاتُ الرِّجَالِ
فَكَصَّ عَلَى عَقَبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ
مِمَّا كُنتُمْ إِنِّي أَرَى مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ
إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ
وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

٣٩- إِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ
وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ
غُرْهُوْلَاءَ دِينِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

1215. A fine description of the Muslim virtues which make for success and whose loss brings about humiliation and failure. "Power": literally, "wind,"—the favourable wind for a sailing ship.

1216. A true description of the Meccan army which met its doom.

1217. It is the way with the leaders of evil, when they find their cause lost, that they wash their hands of their followers and leave them in the lurch. They see more clearly than their dupes. They are not simpletons: they know the consequences of the wrath of God. Satan's "fear" of God is terror combined with hatred,—the very opposite of the feeling which is described in *Taqwa*, viz., the desire to avoid doing anything against God's will, such desire being founded on trust in God and the love of God.

1218. Cf. ii. 10, for "disease in the heart."

Trust in God brings its own reward: our eyes are opened, and we see how great, good, and wise is the Cherisher of the Worlds. Others may sneer and despise. But the blessing of God keeps our minds fresh and our hearts contented.

50. If thou couldst see,
When the angels take the souls
Of the Unbelievers (at death), ¹²¹⁹
(How) they smite their faces
And their backs, (saying) :
"Taste the Penalty of the blazing
Fire—

٥٠- وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ
وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ
وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ۝

51. "Because of (the deeds) which ¹²²⁰
Your (own) hands sent forth :
For God is never unjust
To His servants :

٥١- ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيَكُمْ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ۝

52. " (Deeds) after the manner
Of the People of Pharaoh
And of those before them :
They rejected the Signs of God,
And God punished them
For their crimes: for God
Is Strong, and Strict in
punishment :

٥٢- كَذَّابِ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ مِن
قَبْلِهِمْ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

53. "Because God will never change ¹²²¹
The Grace which He hath bestowed
On a people until they change
What is in their (own) souls :
And verily God is He
Who heareth and knoweth (all
things)."

٥٣- ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا
نِعْمَةً أَنْعَمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا
مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

54. " (Deeds) after the manner
Of the People of Pharaoh
And those before them " : ¹²²²
They treated as false the Signs
Of their Lord ; so We

٥٤- كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ
وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ

1219. In contrast to the taunt against those who trust in God, "that their religion has misled them," is shown the terrible punishment, after death, of those who laughed at Faith.

1220. The punishment is shown to be due to their own deeds of wrong, because God is never unjust to the least of His servants.

1221. God bestows His grace freely, but He never withdraws it arbitrarily. Before He changes their state and circumstances, an actual state of rebellion and contumacy has arisen in their own souls, which brings about its inevitable punishment.

1222. These words from the address of the angels are quoted again, in order to add the comment that follows. Note that in verse 51, the words were that they *rejected* the Signs of God and were *punished*: here the words are that they *treated* the Signs as false and were *destroyed*;—a higher degree of guilt deserved a severer punishment.

Destroyed them for their crimes,
And We drowned the People
Of Pharaoh : for they were all
Oppressors and wrong-doers.

55. **For** the worst of beasts
In the sight of God ¹²²³
Are those who reject Him :
They will not believe.

56. They are those with whom
Thou didst make a covenant, ¹²²⁴
But they break their covenant
Every time and they have not
The fear (of God).

57. If ye gain the mastery
Over them in war,
Disperse, with them, those
Who follow them,
That they may remember.

58. If thou fearest treachery
From any group, throw back
(Their covenant) to them, (so as
To be) on equal terms :
For God loveth not the treacherous.

SECTION 8.

59. **Let** not the Unbelievers
Think that they can
Get the better (of the Godly) :
They will never frustrate (them).

فَاَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَاعْرِقْنَاهُمْ
فِرْعَوْنَ وَكُلِّ كَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ ○

٥٥- اِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

٥٦- الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتَ مِنْهُمْ
ثُمَّ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ
فِي كُلِّ مَرْجَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ ○

٥٧- فَاَمَّا تَشَقَّعُهُمْ فِي الْحَرْبِ
فَشَرِّدْ بِهِمْ مَنِ خَلْفَهُمْ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذْكُرُونَ ○

٥٨- وَاَمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً
فَانْبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَى سَوَاءٍ
اِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْخَائِنِينَ ○

٥٩- وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَبَقُوا
اِنَّهُمْ لَا يُعْجِزُونَ ○

1223. In viii. 22 we were warned against "the worst of beasts in the sight of God", who do not make use of their faculties of hearing, speaking and understanding, in the service of God, and in fact misuse their faculties to blaspheme God. The same brute creatures are shown here in another light : they are faithless both to God and man.

1224. The immediate occasion was the repeated treachery of the Banū Quraiza after their treaties with the Muslims. But the general lesson remains, as noted in the two following verses. Treachery in war is doubly wrong, for it endangers so many lives. Such treachery should be punished in such a way that it gets no chance again. Not only the actual perpetrators but those who follow their standard should be rendered powerless. And the broken treaty should be denounced so that the innocent party can at least fight on equal terms. From actual physical warfare we can carry the same lesson to spiritual warfare. A truce or understanding is possible with those who respect definite principles, not with those who have no principles and are merely out for oppression and wickedness.

60. Against them make ready
Your strength to the utmost
Of your power, including ¹²²⁵
Steeds of war, to strike terror
Into (the hearts of) the enemies,
Of God and your enemies,
And others besides, whom
Ye may not know, but whom ¹²²⁶
God doth know. Whatever
Ye shall spend in the Cause
Of God, shall be repaid
Unto you, and ye shall not
Be treated unjustly. ¹²²⁷

61. **B**ut if the enemy
Incline towards peace,
Do thou (also) incline
Towards peace, and trust
In God: for He is the One
That heareth and knoweth
(All things). ¹²²⁸

62. Should they intend
To deceive thee,—verily God
Sufficeth thee: He it is
That hath strengthened thee
With His aid and
With (the company of)
The Believers; ¹²²⁹

63. And (moreover) He hath put
Affection between their hearts:

٦٠- وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مِمَّا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ
وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهَبُونَ بِهِ
عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ
وَالْآخَرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ
لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
يُؤْتِكُمْ إِيَّاهُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تظْلُمُونَ ○

٦١- وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلَامِ
فاجتنب لهم
وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ
إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ○

٦٢- وَإِنْ يُرِيدُوا أَنْ يَخْدَعُوكَ
فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ اللَّهُ
هُوَ الَّذِي آتَاكَ بِزُنُورِهِ
وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

٦٣- وَالْأَفْ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ

1225. The immediate occasion of this injunction was the weakness of cavalry and appointments of war in the early fights of Islam. But the general meaning follows. In every fight, physical, moral, or spiritual, arm yourself with the best weapons and the best arms against your enemy, so as to instil wholesome respect into him for you and the Cause you stand for.

1226. There are always lurking enemies whom you may not know, but whom God knows. It is your duty to be ready against all, for the sacred Cause under whose banner you are fighting.

1227. Be always ready and put all your resources into your Cause. You do not do so in vain. God's reward will come in various forms. He knows all, and His reward will always be more generous than you can possibly deserve.

1228. While we must always be ready for the good fight lest it be forced on us, even in the midst of the fight we must always be ready for peace if there is any inclination towards peace on the other side. There is no merit merely in a fight by itself. It should be a joyful duty not for itself, but to establish the reign of peace and righteousness and God's Law.

1229. In working for peace there may be a certain risk of treachery on the other side. We must take that risk: because the man of God has God's aid to count upon and the strength of the united body of the righteous.

Not if thou hadst spent
All that is in the earth,
Couldst thou have produced
That affection, but God
Hath done it : for He
Is Exalted in might, Wise.¹²³⁰

لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا
مَا أَلْفَتْ بِينَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ
أَلْفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

64. O Apostle! Sufficient
Unto thee is God,—
(Unto thee) and unto those
Who follow thee
Among the Believers.”¹²³¹

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللَّهُ
وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٦

C. 92.—No man of heart, spirit, or constancy
(viii. 65-75.) Can ever be cowed down by odds
Against him. We fight not for spoils
Or for captives, but for the glory
Of God, and for truth and faith.
We must be kind to all, but specially
Regard the needs of our comrades,
Linked to us by ties of duty and affection.
Our highest reward will be forgiveness
And grace from the Giver of all.

SECTION 9.

65. ② Apostle! rouse the Believers
To the fight. If there are
Twenty amongst you, patient
And persevering, they will
Vanquish two hundred: if a
hundred,
They will vanquish a thousand
Of the Unbelievers: for these
Are a people without
understanding.¹²³²

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى
الْقِتَالِ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عِشْرُونَ
صَابِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا ثَمِينًا وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ
أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ٥

1230. On the immediate occasion, the greatest miracle and most wonderful working of God's grace was the union of hearts produced among the jarring, war-like, excitable elements of Arabia under the gentle, firm, and wise guidance of Muhammad, the Apostle of God. At all times we must pray to God for this gift above all,—union, understanding, and pure and sincere affection among those who take God's name. With it there is strength and success. Without it there is humiliation, slavery, and moral degradation. There may be many causes of difference and dispute. The reconciliation can only come from the glory and wisdom of God.

1231. *The Believers*: mere lip-profession of belief, or even the kind of belief that does not result in action, is not enough. To those whose belief is so sincere that it results in complete trust in God and in fearless action in His service, the consequences on this earth do not matter. God's good pleasure is enough for them.

1232. In a fight, odds of ten to one against any one are appalling. But they do not daunt the men of faith. Whether they personally win or die, their Cause prevails. They are sure to win: because (1) they have divine aid, and (2) even humanly speaking, those who take up arms against truth and righteousness are fools, and their seeming power is but a broken reed.

66. For the present, God
Hath lightened your (task),
For He knoweth that there is
A weak spot in you : ¹²³³
But (even so), if there are .
A hundred of you, patient
And persevering, they will
Vanquish two hundred, and if
A thousand, they will vanquish
Two thousand, with the leave
Of God : for God is with those
Who patiently persevere.

67. It is not fitting
• For an Apostle
That he should have
Prisoners of war until
He hath thoroughly subdued ¹²³⁴
The land. Ye look
For the temporal goods
Of this world; but God
Looketh to the Hereafter :
And God is Exalted in might, Wise.

68. Had it not been for
A previous ordainment ¹²³⁵

٦٦- أَلَنْ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ
وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا
فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ
يَغْلِبُوا إِثْنَيْنِ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ
يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ○

٦٧- مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيِّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أَشْرَى
حَتَّى يُثَخِّنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
تَرْيْدُونَ عَرْضَ الدُّنْيَا
وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ○

٦٨- لَوْلَا كِتَابُ

1233. Given equal conditions, Muslims on account of their faith could win against odds of ten to one. But where their organisation and equipment are weak, as was the case about the time of Badr, they were set a lighter task, and asked to tackle no more than odds of two to one against them. As a matter of fact at Badr they won through against odds of more than three to one.

1234. An ordinary war may be for territory or trade, revenge or military glory,—all "temporal goods of this world." Such a war is condemned. But a Jihād is fought under strict conditions under a righteous Imām, purely for the defence of faith and God's Law. All baser motives, therefore, are strictly excluded. The greed of gain in the shape of ransom from captives has no place in such warfare.

At the same time, if there has been heavy loss of life already, captives may be taken, and it would be for the Imām to exercise his discretion as to the time when it was safe to release them, and whether the release should be free or on parole or on a fine by way of punishment. Destruction and slaughter, however, repugnant to a gentle soul like that of Muḥammad, were inevitable where evil tried to suppress the good. Even Jesus, whose mission was more limited, had to say: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword" (Matt. x: 34).

Seventy captives were taken at Badr, and it was decided to take ransom for them. While the general principle of fighting for the purpose of taking captives in order to get their ransom is condemned, the particular action in this case was approved in *vv.* 68-71.

1235. Though any motive of worldly gain, which may have been in the minds of some among the victorious Muslim army, is condemned as worthy of a severe penalty, what actually happened is ascribed to the Plan of God, which was preordained. Among the prisoners taken were the Prophet's uncle 'Abbās and Ḥaḍhrat 'Alī's brother, 'Aqīl, who afterwards became Muslims. 'Abbās was an ancestor of the founder of the celebrated 'Abbāsi Dynasty which played such a notable part in Islamic history. In his case the promise made in *verse* 70 was amply fulfilled. In the case of all prisoners, if there was any good in their hearts, their very fight against Islam and their capture led to their being blessed with Islam. Thus does God's Plan work in a marvellous way, and evolve good out of seeming evil.

From God, a severe penalty
Would have reached you
For the (ransom) that ye took.

69. But (now) enjoy¹²³⁶ what ye took
in war, lawful and good :
But fear God : for God
Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

SECTION 10.

70. ﴿٢٥﴾ Apostle ! say to those
"Who are captives in your hands :
"If God findeth any good¹²³⁷
In your hearts, He will
Give you something better
Than what has been taken
From you, and He will
Forgive you : for God
Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful."

71. But if they have
Treacherous designs against thee,
(O Apostle !), they have already
Been in treason against God,¹²³⁸
And so hath He given
(Thee) power over them.
And God is He who hath
(Full) knowledge and wisdom.

72. Those who believed,
And adopted exile,

مِّنَ اللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَكُمْ
فِيمَا أَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ٢٥

٦٩- فَكُلُوا مِنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ٢٦

٤٠- يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّمَن فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ مِّنَ
الْأَسْرَىٰ

إِنْ يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا
يُّؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِّمَّا أَخَذَ مِنْكُمْ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ٤١

٤١- وَإِنْ يُرِيدُوا خِيَانَتَكَ
فَقَدْ خَانُوا اللَّهَ مِن قَبْلُ
فَأَمْكَنَ مِنْهُمْ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٤٢

٤٢- إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا

1236. *Enjoy*: literally, *eat*. See vii. 19, n. 1004, and v. 69, n. 776.

1237. This is a consolation to the prisoners of war. In spite of their previous hostility, God will forgive them in His mercy if there was any good in their hearts, and confer upon them a far higher gift than anything they have ever lost. This gift in its highest sense would be the blessing of Islam, but even in a material sense, there was great good fortune awaiting them, *e.g.*, in the case of 'Abbās (see n. 1235).

Note how comprehensive is God's care. He encourages and strengthens the Muslims, at the same time condemning any baser motives that may have entered their minds. He consoles the prisoners of war and promises them better things if there is any good in them at all. And He offers comfort to those who have left their homes in His Cause, and knits them into closer fellowship with those who have helped them and sympathised with them.

1238. If the kindness shown to them is abused by the prisoners of war when they are released, it is not a matter for discouragement to those who showed the kindness. Such persons have in their treachery shown already their treason to God, in that they took up arms against God's Apostle and sought to blot out the pure worship of God. The punishment of defeat, which opened the eyes of some of their comrades, evidently did not open their eyes. But God knows all, and in His wisdom will order all things for the best. The Believers have done their duty in showing such clemency as they could in the circumstances of war. For them "God sufficeth" (viii. 62).

And fought for the Faith,
 With their property
 And their persons,
 In the cause of God,
 As well as those
 Who gave (them) asylum¹²³⁹
 And aid,—these are (all)
 Friends and protectors,
 One of another.
 As to those who believed
 But came not into exile,
 Ye owe no duty
 Of protection to them
 Until they come into exile;¹²⁴⁰
 But if they seek
 Your aid in religion,
 It is your duty
 To help them,
 Except against a people
 With whom ye have
 A treaty of mutual alliance.¹²⁴¹
 And (remember) God
 Seeth all that ye do.

73. The Unbelievers are
 Protectors, one of another :
 Unless ye do this,
 (Protect each other),
 There would be
 Tumult and oppression
 On earth, and great mischief.¹²⁴²

وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ
 وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
 وَالَّذِينَ أَوْوَا وَنَصَرُوا
 أُولَئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ
 وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا
 مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ وَلَايَتِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ
 حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا
 وَإِنْ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ
 فَعَلَيْكُمْ النَّصْرُ
 إِلَّا عَلَى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ
 وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَاقٌ
 وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

۴۳- وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ
 بَعْضٍ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ
 تَكُنْ فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ
 وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ

1239. The reference is to the *Muhājirīn* and the *Anṣār*, the Emigrants and the Helpers, the people who forsook their homes and adopted voluntary exile from Mecca in company with their beloved Leader, and their good friends in Medina, who gave them asylum and every kind of assistance, moral and material. Under the magnetic personality of the Holy Apostle these two groups became like blood-brothers, and they were so treated in matters of inheritance during the period when they were cut off from their kith and kin.

1240. The Believers (Muslims) were entitled to all assistance in matters of religion. But if they were not strong enough to suffer voluntary exile on behalf of the Cause and make the personal sacrifices which their more ardent brethren in faith made, they could not reasonably ask for political or military assistance or protection.

1241. If a community suffers voluntary exile on account of persecution and oppression, and some of its weaker brethren stay behind, holding fast to faith but not prepared for the higher sacrifice, the exiles have still a duty to help their weaker brethren in matters of religion. The exiles, being at open war against the State which oppressed them, would be free to fight against such State. But if the weaker brethren are in a State in mutual alliance with the Community, the Community cannot in honour interfere with that State, whether it is Muslim or not. Presumably the alliance implies that the grievances of the weaker brethren will be redressed by the State itself. But it is not honourable to embarrass your own ally.

1242. Evil consorts with evil. The good have all the more reason for drawing together and not only living in mutual harmony, but being ready at all times to protect each other. Otherwise the world will be given over to aggressions by unscrupulous people, and the good will fail in their duty to establish God's Peace and to strengthen all the forces of truth and righteousness.

74. Those who believe,
And adopt exile,
And fight for the Faith,
In the cause of God,
As well as those
Who give (them) asylum
And aid,—these are (all)
In very truth the Believers :
For them is the forgiveness
Of sins and a provision
Most generous.¹²⁴³

75. And those who
Accept Faith subsequently,¹²⁴⁴
And adopt exile,
And fight for the Faith
In your company,—
They are of you.
But kindred by blood
Have prior rights
Against each other
In the Book of God.¹²⁴⁵
Verily God is well-acquainted
With all things.

۴- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا
وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَالَّذِينَ أَوْوُوا وَنَصَرُوا
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ
وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ۝

۵- وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ وَهَاجَرُوا
وَجَاهَدُوا مَعَكُمْ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنْكُمْ وَأُولُوا الْأَرْحَامِ
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ
فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝



1243. Believers who make all sacrifices in the cause of God have given the best possible proof of their Faith by their actions. They have loved God much, and much will be forgiven them. What they sacrificed was, perhaps, judged by universal standards, of small value, but its value will be estimated by the precious love behind it, and its reward will be of no ordinary kind. It will not be a reward in the ordinary sense at all, for a reward is given once for all. It will be a provision which lasts for ever, and is on the most generous scale.

1244. Those who come into the fold last are none the less brethren in the fullest acceptance of the term. But any special provisions made in the special circumstances of the first martyrs for the Cause will not of course apply to them as the special circumstances which made them necessary have ceased to exist. See next note.

1245. *The Book of God*, i.e., the Universal Plan, the Eternal Decree, the Preserved Tablet (lxxxv, 22). Blood-relationship and its rights and duties do not depend on special circumstances of a temporary nature. Any temporary rights of mutual inheritance established between the early Emigrants and Helpers (n. 1239) would not apply to later recruits, who would come under entirely different circumstances.

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRA IX.

Tauba (Repentance) or *Barāat* (Immunity)

Logically this Sūra follows up the argument of the last Sūra (VIII), and indeed may be considered a part of it, although chronologically the two are separated by an interval of seven years.

We saw that Sūra VIII dealt with the large questions arising at the outset of the life of a new Ummat or organised nation : questions of defence under attack, distribution of war acquisitions after victory, the virtues needed for concerted action, and clemency and consideration for one's own and for enemies in the hour of victory. We pass on in this Sūra to deal with the question : what is to be done if the enemy breaks faith and is guilty of treachery ? No nation can go on with a treaty if the other party violates it at will ; but it is laid down that a period of four months should be allowed by way of notice after denunciation of the treaty ; that due protection should be accorded in the intervening period ; that there should always be open the door to repentance and reunion with the people of God ; and that if all these fail, and war must be undertaken, it must be pushed with utmost vigour.

These are the general principles deducible from the Sūra. The immediate occasion for their promulgation may be considered in connection with the chronological place of the Sūra.

Chronologically, verses 1-29 were a notable declaration of State policy promulgated about the month of Shawwāl, A.H. 9, and read out by Ḥaḍhrat 'Alī at the Pilgrimage two months later in order to give the policy the widest publicity possible. The remainder of the Sūra, verses 30-129, was revealed a little earlier, say about the month of Ramaḍhān, A.H. 9, and sums up the lessons of the Apostle's Tabūk expedition in the summer of A.H. 9 (say October 630).

Tabūk is a place near the frontier of Arabia, quite close to what was then Byzantine territory in the Province of Syria (which includes Palestine). It is on the Hijāz Railway, about 350 miles north-west of Medina, and 150 miles south of Ma'an. It had a fort and a spring of sweet water. In consequence of strong and persistent rumours that the Byzantines (Romans) were preparing to invade Arabia and that the Byzantine Emperor himself had arrived near the frontier for the purpose, the Apostle collected as large a force as he could, and marched to Tabūk. The Byzantine invasion did not come off. But the Apostle took the opportunity of consolidating the Muslim position in that direction and making treaties of alliance with certain Christian and Jewish tribes near the Gulf of 'Aqaba. On his return to Medina he considered the situation. During his absence the Hypocrites had played, as always, a double game, and the policy hitherto followed, of free access to the sacred centre of Islam, to Muslims and Pagans alike, was now altered, as it had been abused by the enemies of Islam.

This is the only Sūra to which the usual formula of *Bismillāh* is not prefixed. It was among the last of the Sūras revealed, and though the Apostle had directed that it should follow Sūra VIII, it was not clear whether it was to form a separate Sūra or only a part of Sūra VIII. It is now treated as a separate Sūra, but the *Bismillāh* is not prefixed to it, as there is no warrant for supposing that the Apostle used the *Bismillāh* before it in his recitation of the Qur-ān. The Sūra is known

under many names : the two most commonly used are (1) *Taubā* (Repentance), with reference to ix. 104 and (2) *Barāat* (Immunity), the opening word of the Sūra.

Summary.—Treaties with those Pagans who have treacherously broken their terms are denounced, but four months' time is given for adjustments or repentance. Pagāns to be excluded from the sacred Mosques. Infidelity to be fought (ix. 1-29, and C. 93).

The People of the Book have obscured the light of God, but the Truth of God must prevail over all. We must be ready to fight for the Faith that is in us ; otherwise we shall be unworthy to uphold God's banner, and He will raise other people in our place (ix. 30-42, and C. 94).

The Hypocrites and their double-dealing : their evil ways pointed out. Their punishment will be as sure as the blessings of the righteous (ix. 43-72, and C. 95).

All evil should be resisted, unless there is repentance : falsehood is not content with breach of faith but mocks all good : it should not be envied but shunned (ix. 73-99, and C. 96).

The good pleasure of God is with those who are sincere and make sacrifices in His cause ; He will forgive those who do wrong and repent, but not those who intend mischief and foment unbelief and disunion among Believers. The Believers by their self-surrender obtain eternal Felicity. God will turn in mercy even to those who, though they waver or fail in duty, turn at last to Him (ix. 100-118, and C. 97).

Those who believe should associate with the righteous and the truthful, actively doing their duty. But if the Community marches out, a part of them should remain behind for the purpose of diligently studying religion and teaching their brethren when they return. Every Sūra increases the faith of those who believe, though those diseased in heart may add doubt to doubt. Trust in God, Lord of the Throne of Glory (ix. 119-129, and C. 98).

C. 93.—If the Pagans repeatedly break
(ix. 1-29) Their treaties, denounce the treaties,
But give them time either to repent
Or to prepare for the just punishment
Of their treachery. Punish the chiefs
Of the treacherous, and destroy them.
But if one of them seek asylum.
Give it : let him hear the Word
Of God and escort him to security.
Be true to the true, but fight those
Who are false to plighted word
And taunt you for your Faith.
No one has the right to approach
The mosques of God unless
He believes in God and follows
God's Law, the law of righteousness.

Sūra IX.

Tauba (Repentance) or *Barāat*
(Immunity).

1. **إ** (declaration) of immunity¹²⁴⁶
From God and His Apostle,
To those of the Pagans
With whom ye have contracted
Mutual alliances :—
2. Go ye, then, for four months,¹²⁴⁷
Backwards and forwards,
(As ye will), throughout the land,
But know ye that ye cannot
Frustrate God (by your falsehood)
But that God will cover
With shame those who reject Him.
3. And an announcement from God
And His Apostle, to the people
(Assembled) on the day
Of the Great Pilgrimage,—¹²⁴⁸
That God and His Apostle
Dissolve (treaty) obligations
With the Pagans.
If, then, ye repent,
It were best for you ;
But if ye turn away,



١- بَرَاءَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ
مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

٢- فَسَيَحْزَنُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ
وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مُنْجَرِي اللَّهِ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يُخْزِي الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

٣- وَإِذَا قَالَ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ
يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ
أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ
فَإِنْ تَبَتُّمُوهُ
فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ

1246. *Barāat* : usually translated "immunity". I do not think that word correctly represents the Arabic word in this context. I retain it as I cannot think of any single English word as an equivalent. The general sense is explained in the introduction to this Sūra. In verse 3 below I use the periphrasis "dissolve treaty obligations," which goes some way to explain the meaning. The Pagans and enemies of Islam frequently made treaties of mutual alliance with the Muslims. The Muslims scrupulously observed their part, but the Pagans violated their part again and again when it suited them. After some years' experience it became imperative to denounce such treaties altogether. This was done in due form, with four months' notice, and a chance was given to those who faithfully observed their pledges, to continue their alliance.

1247. *Four Months*. Some Commentators understand by this the four forbidden months in which warfare by ancient Arabian custom was unlawful, viz., Rajab, Zul-qa'd, Zul-hajj, and Muharram: See ii, 194 n. But it is better to take the signification of the four months immediately following the Declaration. Assuming that the Sūra was promulgated early in Shawwāl (see Introduction), the four months would be Shawwāl, Zul-qa'd, Zul-hajj, and Muharram, of which the last three would also be the customary Prohibited Months.

1248. The great day of Hajj is either the 9th of Zul-hajj ('Arafa), or the 10th (the Day of Sacrifice).

Know ye that ye cannot
Frustrate God. And proclaim
A grievous penalty to those
Who reject Faith.

4. (But the treaties are) not dissolved¹²⁴⁹
With those Pagans with whom
Ye have entered into alliance
And who have not subsequently
Failed you in aught,
Nor aided any one against you.
So fulfil your engagements
With them to the end
Of their term : for God
Loveth the righteous.

5. But when the forbidden
months¹²⁵⁰
Are past, then fight and slay¹²⁵¹
The Pagans wherever ye find them,
And seize them, beleaguer them,
And lie in wait for them
In every stratagem (of war) ;
But if they repent,¹²⁵²
And establish regular prayers
And practise regular charity,
Then open the way for them :
For God is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ
وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ۝

۴- إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ
ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنْقُضُوا شَيْئًا
وَلَمْ يُظَاهِرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَدًا
فَاتِمُوا إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مُدَّتِهِمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

۵- فَإِذَا اسْلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ
فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ
وَخُذُوا هُمْ وَأَحْصُرُوهُمْ
وَاقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ
وَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَآتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

1249. The sacred duty of fulfilling all obligations of every kind, to Muslims and non-Muslims, in public as well as private life, is a cardinal feature of Muslim ethics. The question what is to be done with those who abuse this principle by failing in their duty but expect the Muslims to do their part is not to be solved (in the case of treaties) by a general denunciation of treaties but by a careful consideration of the cases where there has been fidelity and not treachery. There we are enjoined to give the strictest fidelity, as it is a part of righteousness and our duty to God.

1250. The emphasis is on the first clause : it is only when the four months of grace are past, and the other party show no signs of desisting from their treacherous designs by right conduct, that the state of war supervenes—between Faith and Unfaith.

1251. When war becomes inevitable, it must be prosecuted with vigour. According to the English phrase, you cannot fight with kid gloves. The fighting may take the form of slaughter, or capture, or siege, or ambush and other stratagems. But even then there is room for repentance and amendment on the part of the guilty party, and if that takes place, our duty is forgiveness and the establishment of peace.

1252. The repentance must be sincere, and that is shown by conduct—a religious spirit of true prayer and charity. In that case we are not to bar the gate against the repentant. On the contrary, we must do all we can to make their way easy, remembering that God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

6. If one amongst the Pagans¹²⁵³
 Ask thee for asylum,
 Grant it to him,
 So that he may hear the Word
 Of God; and then escort him
 To where he can be secure.¹²⁵⁴
 That is because they are
 Men without knowledge.

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ
 فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ
 ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ
 ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٥

SECTION 2.

7. • **How** can there be a league,
 Before God and His Apostle,
 • With the Pagans, except those¹²⁵⁵
 With whom ye made a treaty
 Near the Sacred Mosque?
 As long as these stand true
 To you, stand ye true to them:
 For God doth love the righteous.
8. How (can there be such a league),¹²⁵⁶
 • Seeing that if they get an advantage
 Over you, they respect not
 In you the ties either of kinship¹²⁵⁷

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ عِنْدَ
 اللَّهِ وَعِنْدَ رَسُولِهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ
 عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ فَمَا اسْتَقَامُوا لَكُمْ
 فَاسْتَقِيمُوا لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ٦

كَيْفَ وَإِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ
 لَا يَرْقُبُوا فِيكُمْ إِلَّا

1253. Even among the enemies of Islam, actively fighting against Islam, there may be individuals who may be in a position to require protection. Full asylum is to be given to them, and opportunities provided for hearing the Word of God. If they accept the Word, they become Muslims and brethren, and no further question arises. If they do not see their way to accept Islam, they will require double protection: (1) from the Islamic forces openly fighting against their people, and (2) from their own people, as they detached themselves from them. Both kinds of protection should be ensured for them, and they should be safely escorted to a place where they can be safe. Such persons only err through ignorance, and there may be much good in them.

1254. *Maaman* : place or opportunity of being secure from all harm.

1255. In this section we have the reasons why the treaties with treacherous Pagan foes were denounced. The clause introducing the exception is a parenthetical clause. The word "Pagans" must be connected with verse 8 which follows. In that verse the word *kaiifa* resumes the clause introduced by the word *kaiifa* at the beginning of verse 7. The exceptional Pagan tribes which remained true to their word were the Banū Ḥamza and the Banū Kināna, who swore their treaty near the Sacred Mosque and faithfully observed it. They were to be given the full benefit of their fidelity even though their kindred tribes were treacherous.

1256. The exceptions having been stated parenthetically in verse 7, the indictment of the general mass of Pagan tribes is now set out briefly but fully and convincingly. After that kind of behaviour how can any treaty be possible with them? The counts are: (1) that whenever they got a slight advantage, they disregarded the ties both of kinship and of covenant as against the Muslims because of their Faith, thus proving doubly treacherous; (2) that they spoke fair words, but had venom in their hearts; (3) that their attitude was one of rebellion against their plighted word; (4) that they disregarded the solemn Signs of God for some miserable worldly gain; (5) that they tried to prevent other people from coming to the Way of God. The first clause is repeated again as the last clause, to emphasise their double treachery, and round off the argument.

1257. Among the Arabs the ties of kinship were so strong as to be almost unbreakable. The Pagan Arabs went out of their way to break them in the case of the Muslims, who were kith and kin to them. Besides the bond of kinship there was the further bond of their plighted oath in the Treaty. They broke that oath because the other parties were Muslims!

Or of covenant ? With (fair words
From) their mouths they entice you,
But their hearts are averse
From you ; and most of them
Are rebellious and wicked.

9. The Signs of God have they sold
For a miserable price,
And (many) have they hindered
From His Way : evil indeed
Are the deeds they have done.

10. In a Believer they respect not
The ties either of kinship
Or of covenant ! It is they
Who have transgressed all
bounds.¹²⁵⁸

11. **B**ut (even so), if they repent,¹²⁵⁹
Establish regular prayers,
And practise regular charity,—
They are your brethren in Faith :
(Thus) do We explain Signs
In detail, for those who understand.

12. But if they violate their oaths
After their covenant,
And taunt you for your Faith,—¹²⁶⁰
Fight ye the chiefs of Unfaith :
For their oaths are nothing to
them :
That thus they may be restrained.

13. **W**ill ye not fight people
Who violated their oaths,

وَلَا ذِمَّةً يُرْضُونَكُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ
وَتَأْبَى قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ٩

٩-اِشْتَرَوْا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
فَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ
إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ١٠

١٠-لَا يَرْقُبُونَ فِي مُؤْمِنٍ إِلَّا
وَلَا ذِمَّةً ط
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُعْتَدُونَ ١١

١١-فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَاتَوُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَآخُوا إِلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ ط
وَنَقُصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ١٢

١٢-وَلِنْ تَكْفُرُوا أَتَيْنَاهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ
وَطَعْنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ
فَقَاتِلُوا أَئِمَّةَ الْكُفْرِ
إِنَّهُمْ لَا آيَانَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَهُونَ ١٣

١٣-إِلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمًا تَكْفُرُوا أَتَيْنَاهُمْ

1258. The catalogue of their sins being set out, it is clear that they were aggressors in the worst possible ways, and war became inevitable.

1259. The chance of repentance and mercy to the worst enemies is again emphasised ; in order that people with any understanding may not be misled into thinking that war was an easy or light matter. This emphasis is balanced by the emphasis in the next verse on the causes which made war inevitable for those with any self-respect.

1260. Not only did the enemies break their oaths shamelessly, but they even taunted the Muslims on their Faith and the " simple-minded " way in which they continued to respect their part of the treaty, as if they were afraid to fight !

Plotted to expel the Apostle,¹²⁶¹
 And took the aggressive
 By being the first (to assault) you ?
 Do ye fear them ? Nay,
 It is God Whom ye should
 More justly fear, if ye believe !

وَهُتُوا بِإِخْرَاجِ الرَّسُولِ وَهُمْ بَدُّوكُمْ
 أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ أَتَخْشَوْنَهُمْ
 قَالَهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

14. Fight them, and God will
 Punish them by your hands,
 Cover them with shame,
 Help you (to victory) over them,
 Heal the breasts of Believers,¹²⁶²

۱۴- قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ
 وَيُخْزِيهِمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ
 وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ

15. And still the indignation of their
 hearts.¹²⁶³
 For God will turn (in mercy)¹²⁶⁴
 To whom He will ; and God
 Is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

۱۵- وَيُذْهِبْ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ
 وَيَتُوبَ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ
 وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

16. Or think ye that ye
 Shall be abandoned,
 As though God did not know¹²⁶⁵
 • Those among you who strive
 With might and main, and take
 None for friends and protectors
 Except God, His Apostle,
 And the (community of) Believers ?
 But God is well-acquainted
 With (all) that ye do.

۱۶- أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُتْرَكُوا
 وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ يَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ
 وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَا رَسُولِهِ
 وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلِيجَةً
 وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

1261. The argument now takes a new turn. An appeal is made to the Muslims on various grounds (1) the shameless disregard of treaties by the enemy, (2) the underhand plots to discredit the Holy Apostle, and turn him out of Medina as he had been turned out of Mecca, (3) the aggressive taken by the Quraish and their confederates in Medina after the treaty of Hudaibiya (A.H. 6, Zul-qa'd, Feb. 628), (4) the manly attitude that fears God rather than men, and (5) the need to prove our sincere faith by test and trial and struggle and sacrifice (ix. 16).

1262. *Heal the breasts of believers, i.e.,* of wounds that they may have sustained from the assaults, taunts, and cruelty of the enemy.

1263. When the victory comes and the wounds are healed, a great peace comes to the hearts of those who have suffered, striven, and struggled. The fighting was an abnormal necessity forced by injustice and oppression. When God's Law is established, the fire of indignation is quelled, and the true Peace of Islam is attained.

1264. God's mercy is unlimited. When evil is destroyed, many of those who were enticed by evil will come into the fold of truth and righteousness, and the cessation of war and conflict will bring peace, certainly to those who fought for the right, but also possibly to those whose eyes have been opened to the working of God's Law and who in healing reconciliation become members of the Brotherhood of Peace in Islam.

1265. Some translators have taken a different verbal construction of this passage, but the ultimate effect in meaning is the same : we must all be tested and tried, but God knows our inmost hearts, and He will support those who strive in His way, out of sincere love for Him, His Apostle, and the body of the true men of Faith.

SECTION 3.

17. It is not for such
As join gods with God,
To visit or maintain¹²⁶⁶
The mosques of God
While they witness
Against their own souls
To infidelity. The works
Of such bear no fruit :
In Fire shall they dwell.
18. The mosques of God
Shall be visited and maintained
By such as believe in God
And the Last Day, establish
Regular prayers, and practise
Regular charity, and fear
None (at all) except God.¹²⁶⁷
It is they who are expected
To be on true guidance.¹²⁶⁸
19. Do ye make the giving¹²⁶⁹
Of drink to pilgrims,

١٧- مَا كَانَ لِلشُّرَكِيَّةِ
أَنْ يَعْمُرُوا مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ
شَاهِدِينَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ بِالْكُفْرِ
أُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ
وَفِي النَّارِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ ○

١٨- إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ
مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ
وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَئِكَ
أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ○

١٩- أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ

1266. "Amara as applied to mosques implies the following ideas: (1) to build or repair; (2) to maintain in fitting dignity; (3) to visit for purposes of devotion; and (4) fill with light and life and activity,—what would be called in Urdu *Masjad ābād karnā*. For brevity I have only used the two words "visit and maintain" in the Translation.

Before the preaching of Islam the Pagans built, repaired, and maintained the Mosque, and celebrated Pagan ceremonies in it, including naked dances round the Ka'ba. They made an income out of it. Islam protested, and the Pagans ejected Muslims and their Leader from Mecca, and shut them out from the Ka'ba itself. When the Muslims were strong enough to retake Mecca (A.H. 8), they purified the Mosque and re-established the worship of the true God. The families who previously held control could not after this be allowed in a state of Paganism to control the Mosque any longer. If they became Muslims, it was a different matter. The further question arose: should they be allowed to visit it and practise their unseemly Pagan rites? Obviously this would be derogatory to the dignity and honour of the Mosque, and was forbidden. This was the particular occasion to which the verse refers. The general deduction is clear. A house of God is a place of sincere devotion, not a theatre for vulgar rites nor a source of worldly income. Only sincere Believers have a right of entry. Who the sincere Believers are, is explained in the next verse.

1267. See the previous note. Sincere Believers are those who have faith in God and the future, and have spirit of devotion and charity—a true and abiding spirit, not merely isolated acts now and again. Moreover they must not bow to worldly greed or ambition, which produces fear of worldly power.

1268. Others may call themselves by what names they like. True guidance is shown by the tests here indicated.

1269. Giving drinks of cold water to thirsty pilgrims, and doing material services to a mosque are meritorious acts, but they are only external. If they do not touch the soul, their value is slight. Far greater, in the sight of God, are Faith, Endeavour, and self-surrender to God. Men who practise these will obtain honour in the sight of God. God's light and guidance comes to them, and not to those self-sufficient beings who think that a little show of what the world considers piety is enough.

Or the maintenance of
The Sacred Mosque, equal
To (the pious service of) those
Who believe in God
And the Last Day, and strive
With might and main
In the cause of God?
They are not comparable
In the sight of God:
And God guides not
Those who do wrong.

20. Those who believe, and suffer
• Exile and strive with might
And main, in God's cause¹²⁷⁰
With their goods and their persons,
Have the highest rank
In the sight of God:
They are the people
Who will achieve (salvation).

21. Their Lord doth give them
Glad tidings of a Mercy
From Himself, of His good
pleasure,
And of Gardens for them,
Wherein are delights
That endure:

22. They will dwell therein
For ever. Verily in God's presence
Is a reward, the greatest (of all).¹²⁷¹

23. **﴿﴾** ye who believe! Take not
For protectors your fathers
And your brothers if they love
Infidelity above Faith:

وَعِمَارَةُ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ أَمَنَ
بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٢٠
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ
أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ٢١

يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ
وَرِضْوَانٍ
وَجَنَّاتٍ لَهُمْ
فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُقِيمٌ ٢٢

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ٢٣

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا آبَاءَكُمْ
وَأَخَوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنْ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ عَلَى

1270. Here is a good description of *Jihād*. It may require fighting in God's cause, as a form of self-sacrifice. But its essence consists in (1) a true and sincere Faith, which so fixes its gaze on God, that all selfish or worldly motives seem paltry and fade away, and (2) an earnest and ceaseless activity, involving the sacrifice (if need be) of life, person, or property, in the service of God. Mere brutal fighting is opposed to the whole spirit of *Jihād*, while the sincere scholar's pen or preacher's voice or wealthy man's contributions may be the most valuable forms of *Jihād*.

1271. Those who strive and suffer in God's cause are promised (1) a mercy specially from Himself, (1) His own good pleasure, (3) gardens of perpetual delight, (4) the supreme reward, God's own Presence or nearness. These are in gradation: (1) is a special mercy, higher than flows out to all creatures: (2) is a consciousness of God's good pleasure, which raises the soul above itself: (3) is that state of permanent spiritual assurance, which is typified by gardens of perpetual delight, and (4) is the final bliss, which is the Presence of God Himself, or, in Sufi language, *Didār-i-Ilāhī*, the sight of God Himself.

If any of you do so,
They do wrong.

24. Say : If it be that your fathers,
Your sons, your brothers,
Your mates, or your kindred ;
The wealth that ye have gained ;
The commerce in which ye fear
A decline ; or the dwellings
In which ye delight—¹²⁷²
Are dearer to you than God,
Or His Apostle, or the striving
In His cause ;—then wait
Until God brings about¹²⁷³
His Decision : and God
Guides not the rebellious.

SECTION 4.

25. Assuredly God did help you
In many battle-fields
And on the day of Hunain : ¹²⁷⁴
Behold ! your great numbers
Elated you, but they availed
You naught : the land,
For all that it is wide,
Did constrain you, and ye

الْإِيمَانُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ
٢٤- قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَ
إِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ
وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ
كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِينُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ
مِنْ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ
فَتَرْتَضُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ٤

٢٥- لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ
وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ
فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا
وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ

1272. Man's heart clings to (1) his own kith and kin—parents, children, brothers and sisters, husbands or wives, or other relatives ; (2) wealth and prosperity ; (3) commerce or means of profit and gain or (4) noble buildings, for dignity, or comfort. If these are a hindrance in God's cause, we have to choose which we love most. We must love God even if it involves the sacrifice of all else.

1273. If we love our earthly ties and comforts, profits and pleasures, more than we love God, and therefore fail to respond to God's cause, it is not God's cause which will suffer. God's purpose will be accomplished, with or without us. But our failure to respond to His will must leave us spiritually poorer, bereft of grace and guidance : " for God guides not the rebellious."


This is of universal application. But it was strikingly illustrated in the case of those faithful ones who obeyed the Apostle's call, left the comfort of their homes in Mecca and suffered exile in Medina, gave up their trade and their possessions, strove and fought for God's cause, sometimes against their own kith and kin or their own tribesmen who were enemies of Islam. They won through. Others were not prepared for such sacrifice, but their failure did not stop the accomplishment of God's plan and purpose.

1274. Hunain on the road to Taif from Mecca, and about fourteen miles to the east of Mecca. It is a valley in the mountainous country between Mecca and Taif. Immediately after the conquest of Mecca, (A.H. 8), the Pagan idolaters, who were surprised and chagrined at the wonderful reception which Islam was receiving, organised a great gathering near Taif to concert plans for attacking the Apostle. The Hawazin and the Thaqif tribes took the lead and prepared a great expedition for Mecca, boasting of their strength and military skill. There was, on the other hand, a wave of confident enthusiasm among the Muslims at Mecca, in which the new Muslims joined. The enemy forces numbered about 4,000, but the Muslim force reached a total of ten or twelve thousand, as every one wished to join. The battle was joined at Hunain, as described in the next note.

Turned back in retreat.¹²⁷⁵

26. But God did pour His calm¹²⁷⁶
On the Apostle and on the
Believers,
And sent down forces which ye
Saw not : He punished
The Unbelievers : thus doth He
Reward those without Faith.

27. Again will God, after this,¹²⁷⁷
Turn (in mercy) to whom
He will : for God
Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

28.  ye who believe ! Truly
The Pagans are unclean ;¹²⁷⁸
So let them not,
After this year of theirs,¹²⁷⁹

ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُمْ مُدْبِرِينَ ۝

٢٦- ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ
وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ جُنُودًا لَمْ
تَرَوْهَا وَعَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

٢٧- ثُمَّ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَلَى
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

٢٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الشِّرْكُونَ
نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا

¹²⁷⁵. For the first time the Muslims had at Hunain tremendous odds in their favour. But this itself constituted a danger. Many in their ranks had more enthusiasm than wisdom, more a spirit of elation than of faith and confidence in the righteousness of their cause. The enemy had the advantage of knowing the ground thoroughly. They laid an ambush in which the advance guard of the Muslim forces was caught. The country is hilly, in which the enemy concealed himself. As soon as the Muslim vanguard entered the Hunain valley, the enemy fell upon them with fury and caused havoc with their arrows from their places of concealment. In such ground the numbers of the Muslims were themselves a disadvantage. Many were slain, and many turned back in confusion and retreat. But the Apostle, as ever, was calm in his wisdom and faith. He rallied his forces and inflicted the most crushing defeat on the enemy.

1276, *Sakin*: calm, peace, security, tranquillity. Cf. ii. 248. The Apostle never approved of over-weening confidence, or reliance merely upon human strength, or human resources or numbers. In the hour of danger and seeming disaster, he was perfectly calm, and with cool courage relied upon the help of God, Whose standard he carried. His calmness inspired all around him, and stopped the rout of those who had turned their backs. It was with God's help that they won, and their victory was complete. They followed it up with an energetic pursuit of the enemies, capturing their camps, their flocks and herds, and their families, whom they had boastfully brought with them in expectation of an easy victory.

1277. Examples of God's mercy and grace in difficult circumstances in one case illustrate His grace and mercy at all times to those who have faith.

1278. *Unclean*: both literally and metaphorically; because Muslims are enjoined to be strict in ablutions and physical cleanliness, as well as in purity of mind and heart, so that their word can be relied upon.

1279. *This year of theirs*: there is a twofold meaning: (1) now that you have complete control of Mecca, and are charged with the purity of worship there, shut out all impurity from this year; (2) you have seen how the Pagans have behaved this year; their year of power and misuse of that power may be called *their year*; it is over, and now you Muslims are responsible.

Approach the Sacred Mosque.
And if ye fear poverty,¹²⁸⁰
Soon will God enrich you,
If He wills, out of His bounty,
For God is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

29. Fight those who believe not
In God nor the Last Day,
Nor hold that forbidden
Which hath been forbidden
By God and His Apostle,
Nor acknowledge the Religion
Of Truth, (even if they are)
Of the People of the Book,
Until they pay the *Jizya*¹²⁸¹
With willing submission,¹²⁸²
And feel themselves subdued.

السَّجْدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَذَا وَإِنْ
خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيكُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ
فَضْلِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

٢٩- قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا
بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ
اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ
مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ
وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ ٥

C. 94.—The enemies of Faith would fain put out
(ix. 30-42.) God's light, but God's light will shine
More glorious than ever. Wealth
Is for use and on trust for mankind:
Hoard not, nor misuse it. Fight
A straight fight in the cause of Right:
Go forth bravely to strive and struggle,
And prove yourselves worthy of God.

1280. The concourse in Mecca added to the profits of trade and commerce. "But fear not," we are told; "the Pagans are a wanting power, bound to disappear, and you should strengthen your own community, that they may more than counterbalance the apparent loss of custom; and God has other means of improving your economic position." This actually happened. The Pagans were extinguished from Arabia, and the concourse of Pilgrims from all parts of the world increased the numbers more than a hundred-fold. Here is commonsense, wisdom, and statesmanship, even if we look at it from a purely human point of view.

1281. *Jizya*: the root meaning is compensation. The derived meaning, which became the technical meaning, was a poll-tax levied from those who did not accept Islam, but were willing to live under the protection of Islam, and were thus tacitly willing to submit to its ideals being enforced in the Muslim State, saving only their personal liberty of conscience as regarded themselves. There was no amount fixed for it, and in any case it was merely symbolical,—an acknowledgment that those whose religion was tolerated would in their turn not interfere with the preaching and progress of Islam. Imām Shāfi'i suggests one dīnār per year, which would be the Arabian gold dīnār of the Muslim States, equivalent in value to about half a sovereign, or about 5 to 6·7 rupees. See n. 410 to iii. 75. The tax varied in amount, and there were exemptions for the poor, for females and children (according to Abū Ḥanīfa), for slaves, and for monks and hermits. Being a tax on able-bodied males of military age, it was in a sense a commutation for military service. But see the next note.

1282. '*An Yadin*, (literally, from the hand) has been variously interpreted. The hand being the symbol of power and authority, I accept the interpretation "in token of willing submission." The *Jizya* was thus partly symbolic and partly a commutation for military service, but as the amount, was insignificant and the exemptions numerous, its symbolic character predominated. See the last note.

SECTION 5.

30. The Jews call 'Uzair a son ¹²⁸³
Of God, and the Christians
Call Christ the Son of God.
That is a saying from their mouths ;
(In this) they but imitate ¹²⁸⁴
What the Unbelievers of old
Used to say. God's curse
Be on them : how they are deluded
Away from the Truth ! ¹²⁸⁵

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ
وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ
ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ
يُضَاهُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ
قَاتِلْهُمْ اللَّهُ أَتَى يَوْمُكَوْنُ ○

31. They take their priests ¹²⁸⁶
And their anchorites to be
• Their lords in derogation of God, ¹²⁸⁷
And (they take as their Lord)
Christ the son of Mary ;
Yet they were commanded
To worship but One God :
There is no god but He.
Praise and glory to Him : ¹²⁸⁸
(Far is He) from having
The partners they associate
• (With Him).

۳۱- اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ
أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
سُبْحَنَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ○

1283 In n 718 to v. 20 I have quoted passages from the Old Testament, showing how freely the expression "sons of God" was used by the Jews. A sect of them called 'Uzair - a son of God, according to Baiḏḥawī. In Appendix II (Sūra v.) I have shown that the constitution of Judaism dates from 'Uzair (Ezra). The Christians still call Christ the Son of God.

1284. Taking men for gods or sons of God was not a new thing. All ancient mythologies have fables of that kind. There was less excuse for such blasphemies after the apostles of God had clearly explained our true relation to God than in the times of primitive ignorance and superstition.

1285. Cf. v. 78.

1286. *Aḥbār* : doctors of law ; priests ; learned men. Cf. v. 47, where they are associated with Rabbis. *Ruhbān* : monks, ascetics, anchorites, men who have renounced the world ; where there is a celibate clergy, the term can be applied to them as well as to members of monastic orders. It is also permissible to apply the term to "saints", where they are deified or credited with divine powers, or where people pray to them as they do in the Roman Catholic Church.

1287. Priest-worship, and the worship of saints and ascetics is a form of superstition to which men have been prone in all ages. The growth of Jewish superstition is shown in the Talmud, and of Christian superstition in the doctrine of papal infallibility and the worship of saints. The mere idea of a separate order of priesthood to stand between God and man and be the exclusive repository of God's secrets is derogatory to the goodness and all-pervading grace of God. The worship of "lords many and gods many" was not confined only to the Pagans. The deification of the son of Mary is put here in a special clause by itself, as it held (and still holds) in its thrall a large portion of civilised humanity.

1288. Cf. vi. 100.

32. **W**ould they extinguish
 God's Light with their mouths,¹²⁸⁹
 But God will not allow
 But that His Light should be
 Perfected, even though the
 Unbelievers
 May detest (it).

٣٢- يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ
 بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ
 وَيَأْتِي اللَّهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يُتِمَّ نُورَهُ
 وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ○

33. It is He Who hath sent
 His Apostle with Guidance
 And religion of Truth,
 To proclaim it¹²⁹⁰
 Over all religion,
 Even though the Pagans
 May detest (it).

٣٣- هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى
 وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ
 لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ
 وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ○

34. O ye who believe! There are
 Indeed many among the priests
 And anchorites, who in falsehood¹²⁹¹
 Devour the substance of men
 And hinder (them) from the Way
 Of God. And there are those
 Who bury gold and silver¹²⁹²
 And spend it not in the Way
 Of God : announce unto them
 A most grievous penalty—

٣٤- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ
 الْأَحْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لِيَآكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ
 بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيُصَدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
 وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا ينفِقُونَهَا
 فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ○

1289. *With their mouths*: there is a twofold meaning: (1) the old-fashioned open oil lamps were extinguished by blowing with the mouth; the Unbelievers would like to blow out God's Light as it is a cause of offence to them; (2) false teachers and preachers distort the Message of God by the false words of their mouth. Their wish is to put out the light of Truth for they are people of darkness; but God will perfect His Light, i.e., make it shine all the brighter in the eyes of men. His Light in itself is ever perfect, but it will penetrate the hearts of men more and more, and so become more and more perfect for them.

1290. Every religion which commends itself widely to human beings and lasts through some space of time has a glimpse of Truth in it. But Islam is the perfect light of Truth. As the greater Light, through its own strength, outshines all lesser lights, so will Islam outshine all else, in spite of the displeasure of those to whom light is an offence. See also *xlvi. 28, n. 4912, and lxi. 9, n. 5442.*

1291. *Bil-bāṭili*—in falsehood, i.e., by false pretences, or in false or vain things. This was strikingly exemplified in the history of Mediæval Europe, though the disease is apt to attack all peoples and organisations at all times. Priests got rich by issuing indulgences and dispensations; they made their office a stepping stone to worldly power and possessions. Even the Monastic Orders, which took vows of poverty for individuals, grew rich with corporate property, until their wealth became a scandal, even among their own nations.

1292. Misuse of wealth, property, and resources is frequently condemned, and in three ways: (1) do not acquire anything wrongfully or on false pretences; (2) do not hoard or bury or amass wealth for its own sake but use it freely for good, whether for yourself or for your neighbours; and (3) be particularly careful not to waste it for idle purposes, but only so that it may fructify for the good of the people.

35. On the Day when heat¹²⁹³
Will be produced out of
That (wealth) in the fire
Of Hell, and with it will be
Branded their foreheads,
Their flanks, and their backs.
—"This is the (treasure) which ye
Buried for yourselves : ¹²⁹⁴ taste ye,
Then, the (treasures) ye buried !"

٣٥- يَوْمَ يُخْتِى عَلَيْهِمَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ
فَتُكْوَى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَ
ظُهُورُهُمْ
هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ لَا تَفْسِكُمْ
فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْذِبُونَ ○

36. The number of months¹²⁹⁵
In the sight of God
Is twelve (in a year)—
So ordained by Him
The day He created
The heavens and the earth ;
Of them four are sacred :
That is the straight usage.
So wrong not yourselves¹²⁹⁶
Therein, and fight the Pagans

٣٦- إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ
شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ
ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَدِيمُ فَلَا تَغْلِبُوا فِيهِ
أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ

1293. A very striking metaphor is here used to figure forth the penalty to be suffered by those who misuse wealth, for such misuse is as much a spiritual sin as any other kind of disobedience to God's Will. Such misused wealth will itself become evidence against us. It will be as if the gold and silver will be heated to add to the heat of Hell-fire; that it will brand our foreheads as reflecting on our intelligence in thinking that wealth was a good thing in itself instead of a mere means of doing good; it will brand our flanks (the middle part of our body, supporting the stomach, the seat of greed), as showing that the greed produced no real satisfaction; and it will brand our backs, the source of our stability and strength, as showing that wealth which might have added to our stability and strength, destroys, by its misuse, our stability and strength.

1294. The voice enforces the moral: "did you expect satisfaction or salvation from the treasures that you misused? Behold! they add your torment!"

1295. This and the following verse must be read together. They condemn the arbitrary and selfish conduct of the Pagan Arabs, who, because there was a long-established custom of observing four months as those in which fighting was forbidden, changed the months about or added or deducted months when it suited them, to get an unfair advantage over the enemy. The four Prohibited Months were: Zul-qa'd, Zul-hajj, Muharram, and Rajab. If it suited them they postponed one of these months, and so a prohibited month became an ordinary month; while their opponents might hesitate to fight, they got an undue advantage. It also upset the security of the Month of Pilgrimage. This very ancient usage made for fair dealing all round, and its infraction by the Pagans is condemned.


The question of a solar astronomical year as against the lunar ecclesiastical year does not arise here. But it may be noted that the Arab year was roughly luni-solar like the Hindu year, the months being lunar and the intercalation of a month every three years brought the year nearly but not accurately up to the solar reckoning. From the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage (A.H. 10) the ecclesiastical year was definitely fixed as a purely lunar year of roughly 354 days, the months being calculated by the actual appearance of the moon. After that, every month of the ecclesiastical year came about 11 days earlier in the solar year, and thus the ecclesiastical months travelled all round the seasons and the solar year. The lunar year remains the ecclesiastical year.

1296. The Muslims were at a disadvantage on account of their scruples about the Prohibited Months. They are told not to wrong themselves in this. If the Pagans fought in all months on one pretence or another, they were allowed to defend themselves in all months. But self-restraint was (as always) recommended as far as possible.

All together as they
Fight you all together.
But know that God
Is with those who restrain
Themselves.

37. Verily the transposing¹²⁹⁷
(Of a prohibited month)
Is an addition to Unbelief :
The Unbelievers are led
To wrong thereby : for they make
It lawful one year,
And forbidden another year,
In order to adjust the number
Of months forbidden by God
And make such forbidden ones
Lawful. The evil of their course
Seems pleasing to them.¹²⁹⁸
But God guideth not
Those who reject Faith.

SECTION 6.

38.  ye who believe ! What
Is the matter with you,¹²⁹⁹
Then, when ye are asked
To go forth in the Cause of God,
Ye cling heavily to the earth ?¹³⁰⁰
Do ye prefer the life
Of this world to the Hereafter ?
But little is the comfort
Of this life, as compared
With the Hereafter.

كَأَنَّهُ كَمَا يَقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَآفَّةً
وَاعْلَمُوا

أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ٥

٣٧- إِنَّمَا التَّسْوِيءُ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْكُفْرِ

يُضِلُّ بِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

يُحِلُّونَهُ عَامًا وَيُحَرِّمُونَهُ عَامًا

لِيُؤْطُوا عِدَّةَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ

فَيُحِلُّوا مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ

زَيْنَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ أَعْمَالِهِمْ

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ٥

ج

٣٨- يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَا لَكُمْ

إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ انْفِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

أَنَّا قُلْنَا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ارْجِعُوا بِحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ فَمَا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي

الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ٥

1297. To meddle with an old-established custom of close time for warfare during Prohibited or Sacred Months was not only a demonstration of the Unbelievers against the Muslims on account of their Faith, but was wrong and unjust in itself, as it abolished a wholesome check on unregulated warfare, and prejudiced the law-abiding side by arbitrary decisions.

1298. Cf. vi. 122. The lawless man thinks he is doing a great thing in getting the better of those who are careful to observe a law they believe in. But the lawless man loses the guidance of Faith, which is symbol of his being guided by God ; he will therefore lose in the end.

1299. The immediate reference is to the expedition to Tabūk (A.H. 9), for which see the Introduction to this Sūra. But the lesson is perfectly general. When a call is made on behalf of a great cause, the fortunate ones are those who have the privilege of responding to the call. The unfortunate ones are those who are so engrossed in their parochial affairs that they turn a deaf ear to the appeal. They are suffering from a spiritual disease.

1300. The choice is between two courses : will you choose a noble adventure and the glorious privilege of following your spiritual leader, or grovel in the earth for some small worldly gain or for fear of worldly loss ? The people who hesitated to follow the call of Tabūk were deterred by (1) the heat of the summer, in which the expedition was undertaken on account of the threat to the existence of the little community, and (2) the fear of losing the fruit harvest, which was ripe for gathering.

39. Unless ye go forth,¹³⁰¹
 He will punish you
 With a grievous penalty,
 And put others in your place;
 But Him ye would not harm
 In the least. For God
 Hath power over all things.
40. If ye help not (your Leader),
 (It is no matter) : for God
 Did indeed help him,¹³⁰³
 When the Unbelievers
 Drove him out : he had
 No more than one companion :¹³⁰³
 They two were in the Cave,
 And he said to his companion,
 "Have no fear, for God
 Is with us" : then God
 Sent down His peace upon him,¹³⁰⁴
 And strengthened him with forces
 Which ye saw not, and humbled¹³⁰⁵
 To the depths the word
 Of the Unbelievers.
 But the Word of God
 Is exalted to the heights :
 For God is Exalted in might, Wise

٣٩- إِلَّا تَنْفِرُوا يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا
 وَيَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ
 وَلَا تَضُرُّوهُ شَيْئًا
 وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
 ٤٠- إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ
 إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
 ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ
 إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ
 لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا
 فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ
 وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا
 وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَى
 وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا
 وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

1301. *Tanfīrū*=go forth, march onward, be ready to strive and suffer. For this is the condition of all progress in the spiritual and moral, as well as in the physical, world. According to the homely English proverb, God helps those who help themselves. Inactivity and lethargy are fatal. No one can rest on his oars. Man is not necessary to God; but God is necessary to man. If a nation receives favours and fails to deserve them, it will be replaced by another : as has so often happened in history. We may take this as a special warning to Islamic nations.

1302. The Tabūk expedition was not a failure. Though many hesitated, many more joined in. But a more striking example was when the Apostle was hunted out of Mecca and performed his famous *Hijrat*. His enemies plotted for his life. He had already sent his followers on to Medina. 'Alī had volunteered to face his enemies in his house. His single companion was Abū Bakr. They two concealed themselves in the cave of *Thaur*, three miles from Mecca, for three nights, with the enemy prowling around in great numbers in fruitless search of them. "We are but two," said Abū Bakr. "Nay," said Muḥammad, "for God is with us!" Faith gave their minds peace, and God gave them safety. They reached Medina, and a glorious chapter opened for Islam. The forces that helped them were not seen, but their power was irresistible.

1303. Literally, "the second of two," which afterwards became Abū Bakr's proud title.

1304. *Cf.* ix. 26.

1305. The superlatives in the Arabic I have rendered by the periphrases, "humbled to the depths" and "exalted to the heights," as they accord better with the genius of the English language. The enemies of Islam had boasted that they would root it out : the result showed them up as ridiculous and despicable.

41. Go ye forth, (whether equipped)¹³⁰⁶
 Lightly or heavily, and strive
 And struggle, with your goods
 And your persons, in the Cause
 Of God. That is best
 For you, if ye (but) knew.

٣١- إِنْ فَرُّوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا
 وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ
 اللَّهِ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ○

42. If there had been
 Immediate gain (in sight),
 And the journey easy,
 They would (all) without doubt
 Have followed thee, but
 The distance was long,
 (And weighed) on them.
 They would indeed swear
 By God, "If we only could,
 We should certainly
 Have come out with you:"
 They would destroy their own
 souls; ¹³⁰⁷
 For God doth know
 That they are certainly lying.

٣٢- لَوْ كَانَ عَرَضًا قَرِيبًا
 وَسَفَرًا قَاصِدًا لَاتَّبَعُوكَ
 وَلَكِنْ بَعُدَتْ
 عَلَيْهِمُ الشُّقَّةُ
 وَسَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ
 لَوِ اسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا مَعَكُمْ
 يُهْلِكُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ
 وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ○

- C. 95. The Believers do their duty, and make
 (ix. 43-72) No excuses,—unlike the Hypocrites,
 Who are a burden whether they join you
 Or hold back. No help should be accepted
 From these last, as they are false and insincere,
 And have a slanderous tongue. Alms
 Are for the poor and the needy, not for those
 Who come in hypocrisy and mock
 At things solemn. But the Hypocrites
 Will be found out and receive due punishment,
 While the righteous will be rewarded
 With bliss and the good pleasure of God.

1306. *Whether equipped lightly or heavily*: to be taken both literally and metaphorically. All were invited, and they were to bring such resources as they had,—light-armed or heavy-armed, on foot or mounted, experienced men for posts of danger, raw men for duties for which they were fit. All would and should help. Even those who were too old or feeble to go could contribute such money or resources as they had.

1307. The arts and excuses of the Hypocrites are here exposed. If there had been booty in sight of an easy walk-over, they would have come. All their oaths are false, and in taking the false oaths they are destroying their spiritual life. Indeed the backsliders are jeopardising their own physical lives in hanging back. If the enemy succeeded, they would all suffer.

SECTION 7.

43. God give thee grace ! ¹³⁰⁸ Why
Didst thou grant them exemption
Until those who told the truth
Were seen by thee in a clear light,
And thou hadst proved the liars ?

٣٣- عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْكَ
لِمَ أَذِنْتَ لَهُمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكَ الَّذِينَ
صَدَقُوا وَتَعْلَمَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ○

44. Those who believe in God
And the Last Day ask thee
For no exemption from fighting
With their goods and persons.
And God knoweth well
Those who do their duty.

٣٣- لَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَ
الْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَنْ يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ
○ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ○

45. Only those ask thee for exemption
Who believe not in God
And the Last Day, and
Whose hearts are in doubt,
So that they are tossed ¹³⁰⁹
In their doubts to and fro.

٣٥- إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَارْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ
فَهُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا يَتَرَدَّدُونَ ○

46. If they had intended
To come out, they would
Certainly have made
Some preparation therefor ;
But God was averse
To their being sent forth ;
So He made them lag behind,
And they were told,
" Sit ye among those
Who sit (inactive)."

٣٦- وَلَوْ أَرَادُوا الْخُرُوجَ
لَأَعَدُّوا لَهُ عُدَّةً
وَلَكِنْ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ انْبِعَاثَهُمْ فَثَبَّطَهُمْ
وَقِيلَ اقْعُدُوا
مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ ○

47. If they had come out
With you, they would not

٣٧- لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِيكُمْ مَا

1308. Literally, "God give thee forgiveness!" But there is no question of fault here, and Imām Rāzī understands the expression to mean an exclamation,—as one might say in English, "God bless you!" In Shakespeare "God save you!" is a simple friendly greeting, without any question of danger: e.g., in "Much Ado about Nothing," iii. 2, 82. Note that in Q. iii. 152, last clause, "forgiveness" is put in juxtaposition to "grace" as having closely allied meanings. What the Holy Apostle had done in the Tabūk expedition was that he had been granting exemptions which may appear from a military point of view too liberal. He was actuated by motives of kindness as well as policy,—kindness, because, in the urgency of the moment he did not wish any one who had a real excuse to be refused exemption; and policy, because, if any one did not come with hearty good-will, he would be a burden instead of a help to the army. The policy was justified, because in fact 30,000 men or more followed him. But that did not in any way justify the slackers, and in a review of the position, the slackers and hypocrites are justly condemned.

1309. Doubt takes away all stability of conduct, while Faith makes a man firm in action and cool and collected in mind.

Have added to your (strength)
But only (made for) disorder,
Harrying to and fro in your
midst ¹³¹⁰

And sowing sedition among you,
And there would have been
Some among you
Who would have listened to them.
But God knoweth well
Those who do wrong.

48. Indeed they had plotted
Sedition before, and upset
Matters for thee,—until
The Truth arrived, and the Decree
Of God became manifest,
Much to their disgust. ¹³¹¹

49. Among them is (many) a man
Who says: "Grant me exemption
And draw me not ¹³¹²
Into trial." Have they not
Fallen into trial already?
And indeed Hell surrounds
The Unbelievers (on all sides).

50. If good befalls thee,
It grieves them; but if
A misfortune befalls thee,
They say, "We took indeed
Our precautions beforehand,"
And they turn away rejoicing.

زَادُواكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا
وَلَا أَوْضَعُوا خِلَالَكُمْ
يَبْغُونَ كُمْ الْفِتْنَةَ
وَفِيكُمْ سَمْعُونَ لَهُمْ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ○

٢٨- لَقَدْ ابْتَغُوا الْفِتْنَةَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَقَلَبُوا
لَكَ الْأُمُورَ حَتَّى جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَظَهَرَ
أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَهُمْ كَرُهُونَ ○

٢٩- وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ اضْزَنْ لِي وَ
لَا تَفْتِنِّي
إِنِّي الْفِتْنَةَ سَقَطُوا
وَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَحَاطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ○

٥٠- إِنْ تُصِيبَكَ حَسَنَةٌ سَوْهُمْ وَإِنْ
تُصِيبَكَ مُصِيبَةٌ
يَقُولُوا قَدْ أَخَذْنَا أَمْرَنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ
وَيَتَوَكَّلُوا وَهُمْ فَرِحُونَ ○

1310. *Khilal* has more than one meaning, but I follow the interpretation of Raḡib and the majority of accepted Commentators, who take it mean "in your midst".

1311. Even plotters against Truth are only too glad to get an opportunity of meddling from within with affairs which they want to spoil or upset. They plot from outside, but they like to get into the inner circle, that their chances of intrigue may be all the greater. They are, however, unwilling to incur any danger or any self-sacrifice. Their whole activities are directed to mischief. Great wisdom is required in a leader to deal with such a situation, and the best of such leaders must need divine guidance, as was forthcoming in this case.

1312. *Fitnat*, as explained in n. 1198, viii, 25, may mean either trial or temptation, or else tumult, turmoil, or sedition. The Commentators here take the former meaning, and explain that some Hypocrites claimed exemption from service in the Tabūk expedition in the direction of Syria on the plea that they could not withstand the charms of Syrian women and ought best to stay at home. The answer is: "But you have already fallen into temptation here by refusing service and disobeying the call." But perhaps the other meaning of "turmoil" may also be permissible as a secondary echo: in that case they object to be drawn into the turmoil of war, but they are told that they are already in a moral turmoil in advancing a disingenuous plea. In using the English word "trial" in the translation, I have also had in my mind the two shades of meaning associated with that word in English.

51. Say : Nothing will happen to us
Except what God has decreed
For us : He is our Protector :
And on God let the Believers
Put their trust.

٥١- قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا
هُوَ مَوْلَانَا
وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ○

52. Say : " Can you expect for us
(Any fate) other than one
Of two glorious things—
(Martyrdom or victory) ?
But we can expect for you
Either that God will send
His punishment from Himself,
Or by our hands. So wait
(Expectant) ; we too
Will wait with you." 1313

٥٢- قُلْ هَلْ تَرْتَضُونَ بِنَا إِلَّا أَحَدَى
الْحُسَيْنَيْنِ وَنَحْنُ نَتَرْتَضُ بِكُمْ
أَنْ يُصِيبَكُمْ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ
أَوْ يَأْتِيَنَا قَارِعٌ
إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُتَرَبِّصُونَ ○

53. Say : " Spend (for the Cause)
Willingly or unwillingly : 1314
Not from you will it be
Accepted : for ye are indeed
A people rebellious and wicked."

٥٣- قُلْ أَنْفِقُوا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا
لَنْ يُتَقَبَّلَ مِنْكُمْ
إِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ○

54. The only reasons why
Their contributions are not
Accepted are : that they reject
God and His Apostle ;
That they come to prayer
Without earnestness ; and that
They offer contributions
unwillingly.

٥٤- وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَنْ تُقَبَّلَ مِنْهُمْ
نَفَقَتُهُمْ
إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَى
وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَاهُونَ ○
٥٥- فَلَا تُجْزِكُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ

55. Let not their wealth
Nor their (following in) sons 1315

1313. The waiting of the Unbelievers and that of the Believers are in different senses. The Unbelievers wish for disaster to the Believers, but the Believers will either conquer or die as martyrs in the Cause, in either case happy in the issue. The Believers expect punishment for the Unbelievers for their infidelity, either through their own instrumentality, or in some other way in God's Plan, and the Unbelievers would not like it in their case. Cf. vi. 158.

1314. The Hypocrites, who secretly plotted against Islam, might sometimes (and they did) make a show of making some contribution to the Cause in order to keep up their pretence. Their contributions were not acceptable, whether they seemed to give willingly or unwillingly, because rebellion and disobedience were in their hearts. Three reasons are specifically given for their rejection, in the next verse : (1) they did not believe ; (2) their prayers were not earnest, but for mere show ; and (3) in reality their hearts were not behind the contributions which they offered. Nothing is acceptable to God which does not proceed from a pure and sincere heart.

1315. If they appeared to be prosperous, with their purses and their quivers full (metaphorically), they were not to be envied. In reality their wealth and their sons might themselves be a snare ; Cf. viii. 28. On this particular occasion this was proved to the hilt. The wealth of the Pagans filled them with pride, darkened their understanding, and led to their destruction. Their sons and followers adopted the Faith which their fathers had fought against, much to the chagrin of the fathers, whose spiritual death was even worse than their discomfiture in this world.

Dazzle thee: in reality
God's Plan is to punish them
With these things in this life¹³¹⁶
And that their souls may perish
In their (very) denial of God.

56. They swear by God
That they are indeed
Of you; but they are not
Of you: yet they are afraid
(To appear in their true colours).

57. If they could find
A place to flee to,
Or caves, or a place
Of concealment, they would
Turn straightway thereto,
With an obstinate rush.¹³¹⁷

58. And among them are men
Who slander thee in the matter
Of (the distribution of) the alms:¹³¹⁸
If they are given part thereof,
They are pleased, but if not,
Behold! they are indignant!

59. If only they had been content
With what God and His Apostle
Gave them, and had said,
"Sufficient unto us is God!
God and His Apostle will soon
Give us of His bounty:
To God do we turn our hopes!"—
(That would have been the right
course).¹³¹⁹

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا

وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ○

٥٦- وَيَجْعَلُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُمْ لَمِنكُمْ

وَمَا هُمْ مِنكُمْ

وَلَكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَفْقَهُونَ ○

٥٧- لَوْ يَجِدُونَ مَلْجَأً أَوْ مَغَارَتٍ

أَوْ مَدْخَلًا لَّوَلَّوْا إِلَيْهِ

وَهُمْ يَجْعَلُونَ ○

٥٨- وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَلْمِزُكَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ

فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطُوا

مِنْهَا إِذَا هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ ○

٥٩- وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا

مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ

سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَرَسُولُهُ ۚ

إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ ○

1316. Cf. iii. 176-178.

1317. *Jamaḥa*=to be ungovernable, to run like a runaway horse, to rush madly and obstinately.

1318. *Ṣadaqa*=alms, that which is given in God's name, mainly to the poor and needy, and for the cognate purposes specified in the next verse but one. *Zakāt* is the regular and obligatory charity in an organised Muslim community, usually 2½ per cent. of merchandise and 10 per cent. on the fruits of the earth. There is a vast body of literature on this subject. The main points may be studied in the *Hidāya fil furū*, of Shaiḫ Burḥanud dīn 'Alī.

1319. Selfish men think that charitable funds are fair game for raids, but the Islamic standards on this subject are very high. The enforcement of such standards is always unpopular, and even the Holy Apostle was subject to obloquy and slander for his strictness to principle. In doubtful cases, claimants who are disappointed should not blame the principles or those who enforce them, but put their trust in God, whose bounties are unbounded, and are given to all, whether rich or poor, according to their needs and their deserts. For every one it is excellent advice to say: deserve before you desire.

SECTION 8.

60. Alms are for the poor .
And the needy, and those
Employed to administer the (funds) ;
For those whose hearts
Have been (recently) reconciled
(To Truth) ; for those in bondage
And in debt ; in the Cause
Of God ; and for the wayfarer : 1320
(Thus is it) ordained by God,
And God is Full of knowledge
And wisdom.

61. Among them are men
Who molest the Prophet
And say, " He is (all) ear." 1321
Say, " He listens to what is
Best for you : he believes
In God, has faith
In the Believers, and is a Mercy
To those of you who believe."
But those who molest the Apostle
Will have a grievous penalty.

62. To you they swear by God,
In order to please you :
But it is more fitting
That they should please
God and His Apostle,
If they are Believers.

٦٠- إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ
وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ
فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥

٦١- وَمِنْهُمْ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ النَّبِيَّ
وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ أَعْدٌ قُلُودُنْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَيُؤْمِنُ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَرَحْمَةً
لِّلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

٦٢- يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَكُمْ لِيَرْضَوْكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُرْضَوْهُ
إِنْ كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ٥

1320. Alms or charitable gifts are to be given to the poor and needy and those who are employed in their service. That is, charitable funds are not to be diverted to other uses, but the genuine expenses of administering charity are properly chargeable to such funds. Who are needy? Besides the ordinary indigent, there are certain classes of people whose need is great and should be relieved. Those mentioned here are: (1) men who have been weaned from hostility to Truth, who would probably be persecuted by their former associates, and require assistance until they establish new connections in their new environment; (2) those in bondage, literally and figuratively; captives of war must be redeemed; slaves should be helped to freedom; those in the bondage of ignorance or superstition or unfavourable environment should be helped to freedom to develop their own gifts; (3) those who are held in the grip of debt should be helped to economic freedom; (4) those who are struggling and striving in God's Cause, by teaching or fighting or in duties assigned to them by the righteous Imām, who are thus unable to earn their ordinary living; and (5) strangers stranded on the way. All these have a claim to charity. They should be revealed by individual or organised effort, but in a responsible way.

1321. The assonance of the Arabic words "yū-zūna" and "uṣūnun" is of course lost in the Translation. But the sense remains. Detractors of the Prophet said, "O! he listens to everybody!" "Yes," is the answer, "he listens for their good; he is a mercy and a blessing to all men of Faith, but specially to you (who are addressed)." The general statement is emphasised for the particular people addressed.

63. Know they not that for those
Who oppose God and His Apostle,
Is 'the Fire of Hell' ?—
Wherein they shall dwell.
That is the supreme disgrace.

٦٣- أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مَن يُحَادِدِ اللَّهَ وَ
رَسُولَهُ فَأَنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا
ذَلِكَ الْخِزْيُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

64. The Hypocrites are afraid ¹³²²
Lest a Sūra should be sent down
About them, showing them what
Is (really passing) in their hearts.
Say: "Mock ye! But verily
God will bring to light all
That ye fear (should be revealed)."

٦٤- يَحْذَرُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ أَنْ تُنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ
سُورَةٌ تَتْلُوهُمْ بِمَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
قُلْ اسْتَزِرُّوْا إِنَّ اللَّهَ
مُخْرِجُ مَا تَحْذَرُونَ ۝

65. If thou dost question them,
They declare (with emphasis):
"We were only talking idly
And in play." Say: "Was it
At God, and His Signs,
And His Apostle, that ye
Were mocking?"

٦٥- وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ
لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ
قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ أَيَّاتِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ۝

66. Make ye no excuses:
Ye have rejected Faith
After ye had accepted it.
If We pardon some of you,
We will punish others amongst you,
For that they are in sin. ¹³²³

٦٦- لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ
إِنْ نَعْفُ عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِّنْكُمْ نُعَذِّبْ
طَائِفَةً يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُنَافِقُونَ ۝

SECTION 9.

67. The Hypocrites, men and
women,
(Have an understanding) with each
other: ¹³²⁴

٦٧- الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ
مِّنْ بَعْضٍ ۝

1322. The dissection of the motives of the Hypocrites alarmed them. For it meant that they would fail in their policy of having the best of both worlds and undermining the loyalty of the weaker members of the Muslim community. So they turn it off as a jest. But they are sharply rebuked: "Can you make such solemn matters subjects of playful jokes? Fie upon you! You are found out, and your guile is of no effect." In fact many of the Hypocrites turned over a new leaf and became good Believers afterwards, while a few definitely threw in their lot with the open enemies of Islam and shared their fate. This is referred to in the next verse but one.

1323. See last note. Hypocrisy is a half-way house, a state of indecision in the choice between good and evil. Those who definitely range themselves with good obtain forgiveness; those who pass definitely to evil suffer the penalties of evil.

1324. Literally, "the Hypocrites...are of each other." The forms of hypocrisy may vary, but they are all alike, and they understand each other's hypocrisy. They hold together.

They enjoin evil, and forbid
What is just, and are close¹³²⁵
With their hands. They have
Forgotten God; so He¹³²⁶
Hath forgotten them. Verily
The Hypocrites are rebellious
And perverse.

68. God hath promised the Hypocrites,
Men and women, and the rejecters
Of Faith, the fire of Hell :
• Therein shall they dwell :
Sufficient is it for them :
• For them is the curse of God,¹³²⁷
And an enduring punishment,—

69. As in the case of those
Before you : they were
Mightier than you in power,
And more flourishing in wealth
And children. They had
Their enjoyment of their portion :
And ye have of yours, as did
Those before you ; and ye
Indulge in idle talk
As they did. They !—
Their works are fruitless
In this world and in the Hereafter,
And they will lose
(All spiritual good).

70. Hath not the story reached them
Of those before them ?—
The people of Noah, and 'Ad,¹³²⁸
And Thamūd ; the people

يَا مُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ
نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ○

٦٨- وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا هِيَ حَسْبُهُمْ وَلَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ○

٦٩- كَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْكُمْ قُوَّةً وَكَثْرَ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا فَاسْتَمْتَعُوا بِخَلْقِهِمْ فَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِخَلْقِكُمْ كَمَا اسْتَمْتَعَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ بِخَلْقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ كَالَّذِينَ خَافُوا أُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ○

٧٠- أَلَمْ يَأْتِهِمْ نَبَأُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَقَوْمِ

•1325. The English phrase "close-fisted" would cover only a part of the meaning. The hand is the symbol of power, help, and assistance. This may be financial, or it may be in other ways. The Hypocrites pretend a great deal, but are of no use or real help to any one.

1326. Cf. vii. 54 and n. 1029. They ignore God ; and God will ignore them.

1327. "Curse," here as elsewhere, is deprivation of grace and mercy, brought about by the rejection of God by the Unbelievers.

1328. The story of Noah is told in vii. 59-64 ; of 'Ad in vii. 65-72 ; and of Thamūd in vii. 73-79 ; of Abraham in numerous places, but see specially vi. 74-82 ; of Midianites in vii. 85-93 ; and of Lot and the Cities of the Plain overthrown for their wickedness, in vii. 80-84.

SECTION 10.

73. ⑦ Prophet ! strive hard against
The Unbelievers and the
Hypocrites,
And be firm against them.
Their abode is Hell,—
An evil refuge indeed.

۞ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ
وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَمَا لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ
وَبَيْتُ الْمَصِيرِ ۝

74. They swear by God that they
: Said nothing (evil), but indeed
They uttered blasphemy,
And they did it after accepting
Islam ; and they meditated ¹³³¹
A plot which they were unable
To carry out : this revenge
Of theirs was (their) only return
For the bounty with which
God and His Apostle had enriched
Them ! If they repent,
It will be best for them ;
But if they turn back
(To their evil ways),
God will punish them
With a grievous penalty
In this life and in the Hereafter :
They shall have none on earth
To protect or help them.

۞ يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا
وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلْبَةَ الْكُفْرِ
وَكُفْرًا وَابْعَدُوا سُلَامَهُمْ
وَهُمْ بِالْأَمْرِ أُولَاءُ وَمَا نَقَمُوا إِلَّا
أَنْ أَغْنَاهُمْ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
فَإِنْ يَتُوبُوا إِلَيْكَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُمْ
وَإِنْ يَتَوَلَّوْا يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللَّهُ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَمَا لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ۝

75. Amongst them are men
Who made a Covenant with God,
That if He bestowed on them
Of His bounty, they would give
(Largely) in charity, and be truly
Amongst those who are righteous.

۞ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن عَاهَدَ اللَّهُ
لَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ
وَلَنَكُونَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ۝

1331. The reference is to a plot made by the Apostle's enemies to kill him when he was returning from Tabūk. The plot failed. It was all the more dastardly in that some of the conspirators were among the men of Medina, who were enriched by the general prosperity that followed the peace and good government established through Islam in Medina. Trade flourished ; justice was firmly administered with an even hand. And the only return that these men could make was a return of evil for good. That was their revenge, because Islam aimed at suppressing selfishness, stood for the rights of the poorest and humblest, and judged worth by righteousness rather than by birth or position.

76. But when He did bestow
Of His bounty, they became
Covetous, and turned back
(From their Covenant), averse
(From its fulfilment).

٤٦- فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَتَوَلَّوْا
وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ○

77. So He hath put as a consequence ¹³³²
Hypocrisy into their hearts,
(To last) till the day whereon
They shall meet Him : because
They broke their Covenant
With God, and because they
Lied (again and again).

٤٧- فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
إِلَى يَوْمٍ يَلْقَوْنَ
بِمَا أَخْلَفُوا اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ
وَبِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ○

78. Know they not that God
Doth know their secret (thoughts)
And their secret counsels,
And that God knoweth well
All things unseen ?

٤٨- أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ
وَنَجْوَاهُمْ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ○

79. Those who slander such
Of the Believers as give themselves
Freely to (deeds of) charity,
As well as such as can find
Nothing to give except
The fruits of their labour,—
And throw ridicule on them,—¹³³³
God will throw back

٤٩- الَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ الْمُطَّوِّعِينَ مِنَ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ
وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ إِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ
فَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنْهُمْ

1332. If men are false to their covenants and words, the natural consequence will be hypocrisy to cover their falsehood. All consequences of our own acts are in Quranic language ascribed to God. Such consequences will last till the Day of Judgment, when they will have to account for their deeds. They may think that they are deceiving men by their hypocrisy, but they cannot deceive God, to Whom all their most secret thoughts and plots and doings are known.

1333. When financial help is necessary for the Cause, every Muslim contributes what he can. Those who can afford large sums are proud to bring them in of their own free-will, and those who are very poor contribute their mite or their labour. Both kinds of gifts are equally precious because of the faith and good-will behind them, and only cynics will laugh at the scantiness of the one or the lavishness of the other. Sometimes they not only laugh, but attribute wrong motives to the givers. Such conduct is here reprimanded.

Their ridicule on them :
And they shall have
A grievous penalty.

سَخَّرَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُمْ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ٥

80. Whether thou ask
For their forgiveness,
Or not, (their sin is unforgivable) :
If thou ask seventy times¹³³⁴
For their forgiveness, God
Will not forgive them :
Because they have rejected
God and His Apostle : and God
Guideth not those
Who are perversely rebellious.

٨٠- اَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ
اَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ
اِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً
فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ
ذَلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ٥

SECTION 11.

81. Those who were left behind
(In the Tabūk expedition)
Rejoiced in their inaction
Behind the back of the Apostle
Of God : they hated to strive *
And fight, with their goods
And their persons, in the Cause
Of God : they said,
" Go not forth in the heat." ¹³³⁵
Say, " The fire of Hell
Is fiercer in heat." If
Only they could understand !

٨١- قَرَحَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خَلْفَ
رَسُولِ اللَّهِ
وَكَرِهُوا أَنْ يُجَاهِدُوا
بَأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَقَالُوا لَا تَنْفِرُوا فِي الْحَرِّ
قُلْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ أَشَدُّ حَرًّا
لَوْ كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ٥

82. Let them laugh a little :
Much will they weep : ¹³³⁶

٨٢- فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَلَيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا ٥

1334. An awful warning for those who actively oppose the Cause of God. The Holy Apostle was by nature full of mercy and forgiveness. He prayed for his enemies. But in such a case even his prayers are nullified by their attitude of rejecting God.

1335. The Tabūk expedition had to be undertaken hurriedly in the heat of summer, because of a threat or fear of Byzantine invasion. They marched from Medina about the month of September or October in the solar calendar.

1336. They may sneer or ridicule or rejoice now : that will be only for a little ; much will they have to weep for afterwards.

A recompense for the (evil)
That they do.

83. If, then, God bring thee back
To any of them, and they ask
Thy permission to come out
(With thee), say : " Never shall ye
Come out with me, nor fight
An enemy with me :
For ye preferred to sit
Inactive on the first occasion :
Then sit ye (now)
With those who lag behind."

84. Nor do thou ever pray
For any of them that dies,
Nor stand at his grave ; ¹³³⁷
For they rejected God
And His Apostle, and died
In a state of perverse rebellion.

85. Nor let their wealth
Nor their (following in) sons
Dazzle thee : God's Plan
Is to punish them
With these things in this world,
And that their souls may perish
In their (very) denial of God. ¹³³⁸

جَزَاءٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ○

۸۳- فَإِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَى طَائِفَةٍ مِنْهُمْ
فَاسْتَأْذَنُوكَ لِلْخُرُوجِ
فَقُلْ لَنْ تَخْرُجُوا مَعِيَ أَبَدًا
وَلَنْ تُقَاتِلُوا مَعِيَ عَدُوًّا
إِنَّكُمْ رَضِيتُمْ بِالْقُعُودِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
فَاتَّعِدُوا مَعَ الْخَالِفِينَ ○

۸۴- وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ مَاتَ
أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ
إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَمَا تَأْتُوا وَهُمْ فَسِيقُونَ ○

۸۵- وَلَا تَعْجَبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَأَوْلَادُهُمْ
إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ
أَنْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَتَرْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ
وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ○

1337. On the death of a Muslim it is the pious duty of every neighbouring Muslim, who can, to assist in the simple funeral ceremonies,—the prayer for mercy before the body is consigned to the grave, and the consignment of the body to the grave, by a simple, solemn and dignified ritual, in which the near relatives or friends help with the bier while the rest stand by the grave-side. For those who have shown hostility to Islam, this would not be seemly and is forbidden.

1338. Except for the omission of a single word (" life "), this verse repeats verse 55 above. But the repetition indicates the harmonious closing of the same argument in two aspects: In ix. 55 it occurred in connection with the reasons for refusing to receive the contributions of such persons to the expenses of an enterprise which, though vital to Islam's defence, was secretly opposed by such persons. Here (in ix. 85) it is a question of refusing to participate in the obsequies of such persons after their death ; it is natural to omit the word " life " in this case.

86. ~~When~~ When a Sura comes down,
 Enjoining them to believe
 In God and to strive and fight
 Along with His Apostle,
 Those with wealth and influence
 Among them ask thee
 For exemption, and say :
 "Leave us (behind) : we
 Would be with those
 Who sit (at home)."

٨٦- وَإِذَا أَنْزَلْتَ سُورَةً أَنْ آمِنُوا
 بِاللَّهِ وَجَاهِدُوا
 مَعَ رَسُولِهِ
 اسْتَأْذِنَكَ أُولُو الطُّولِ مِنْهُمْ
 وَقَالُوا ذَرْنَا
 نَكُنْ مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ ○

87. They prefer to be with
 (the women),
 remain behind (at home) : ¹³³⁹
 their hearts are sealed
 And so they understand not.

٨٧- رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ
 وَطُبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ
 فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ○

88. But the Apostle, and those
 Who believe with him,
 Strive and fight with their wealth
 And their persons : for them
 Are (all) good things : ¹³⁴⁰
 And it is they
 Who will prosper.

٨٨- لَكِنَّ الرُّسُولَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
 مَعَهُ جَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ
 وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْخَيْرَاتُ
 وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ○

89. God hath prepared for them
 Gardens under which rivers flow,

٨٩- أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ

1339. *Khawālif*, plural of *Khālifa*, those (feminine) who remain behind at home when the men go to war; women. There is a stinging taunt in this, a suggestion that such men were cowards, preferring to remain behind like women when stiff work was to be done by men in defending their homes. They were not only cowards, but fools; as they did not understand their own best interests. If the enemy got the better of their brethren, they would themselves be crushed. "Their hearts are sealed": the habits of cowardice and hypocrisy which they have adopted have become their second nature.

1340. "Good things" and "prosperity" are to be understood both in the physical and in the highest spiritual sense as the next verse makes clear.

To dwell therein :
That is the supreme felicity.¹³⁴¹

SECTION 12.

90. And there were, among
The desert Arabs (also),
Men who made excuses
And came to claim exemption ;
And those who were false
To God and His Apostle
(Merely) sat inactive.¹³⁴²
Soon will a grievous penalty
Seize the Unbelievers
Among them.

91. There is no blame¹³⁴³
On those who are infirm,

مَحْتَبَا الْأَنْهَارِ خَلِيدِينَ فِيهَا
ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

٩٠- وَجَاءَ الْمُعَذِّرُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ
لِيُؤْذَنَ لَهُمْ وَقَعَدَ الَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝

٩١- لَيْسَ عَلَى الضَّعَفَاءِ

1341. In this verse there is a reminiscence, but not an exact repetition, of verse 72 above. This balances the parallel repetition or reminiscence in verse 85 above. See n. 1338. The symmetry of the argument is thus completed, as regards the Hypocrites of Medina, before we pass on to consider the case of the Hypocrites among the desert Bedouins in section 12.

1342. Not only had the Hypocrites a nest in Medina, but their tactics affected some of the village or desert Bedouins, who loved war and would have followed a standard of war even if no question of Faith or a sacred Cause was involved. But some of them, though professing Islam, were frightened by the hardships of the Tabūk expedition and the prospect of meeting the trained armies of the great Roman (Byzantine) Empire. They made all sorts of lying excuses, but really their want of faith made them ineligible for being enlisted in a sacred Cause, in the terms of ix. 46-47 and ix. 53-54. Some came to make excuses; others did not even come, but sat at home, ignoring the summons.

1343. Though active service in person or by contributing resources is expected in emergencies of every person who believes in the Cause, there are some who must necessarily be exempted without the least blame attaching to them. Such would be those who are weak in body on account of age, sex, infirmity, or illness. Personal service in their case is out of the question, but they could contribute towards expenses if they are able. But if they are too poor to afford even such assistance, they are excused. But in all cases the motive must be sincere, and there should be a desire to serve and do such duty as they can. With such motives people are doing good or right in whatever form they express their service: sometimes, in Milton's words, "they also serve who only stand and wait." In any case their purity of motive would get God's grace and forgiveness, and we must not criticise even if we thought they might have done more.

Or ill, or who find
No resources to spend
(On the Cause), if they
Are sincere (in duty) to God
And His Apostle :
No ground (of complaint)
Can there be against such
As do right : and God
Is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

92. Nor (is there blame)
On those who came to thee
To be provided with mounts,¹³⁴⁴
And when thou saidst,
"I can find no mounts
For you," they turned back,
Their eyes streaming with tears
Of grief that they had
No resources wherewith
To provide the expenses.

93. The ground (of complaint)
Is against such as claim
Exemption while they are rich.
They prefer to stay
With the (women) who remain
Behind : God hath sealed
Their hearts ; so they know not
¹⁰ (What they miss).¹³⁴⁵
³⁰

وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضَى وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا
يَجِدُونَ
مَا يُنْفِقُونَ حَرَجَ إِذَا انْصَرَفُوا إِلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِ مَا عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِينَ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

٩٢- وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَا أَتَوْكَ
لَتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ لَا أَجِدُ مَا أَحْمِلُكُمْ
عَلَيْهِ
تَوَلَّوْا وَأَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ
حَزَنًا
إِلَّا يَجِدُوا مَا يُنْفِقُونَ

٩٣- إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ
يَسْتَأْذِنُونَكَ وَهُمْ أَغْنِيَاءُ
رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ
وَطَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ
فَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

1344. *Hamala, yahmilu*, here seems to mean : to provide means of transport, viz., mounts (horses, camels, etc.) for riding, and perhaps beasts of burden for carrying equipment and baggage, suitable to the rank of those concerned. It may possibly mean other facilities for getting about, such as boots and shoes, or provisions ; for an army's march depends upon all these things. Where people fight as volunteers for a cause, without an extensive war fund, those who can afford it provide such things for themselves, but those without means, yet anxious to serve, have to be left behind. Their disappointment is in eagerness to serve.

1345. Cf. ix. 87, where similar phrases are used for a similar shirking of duty by towns-folk, while ere we are considering the desert folk. It is not only a duty, but a precious privilege, to serve a great Cause by personal self-sacrifice. Those who shirk such an opportunity know not what they miss.

